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Ting-Trees

TREE-PLANTING CAMPAIGN TO FOCUS ON HOUSING ESTATES

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Housing estates will be the focus of the tree-planting campaign to be launched simultaneously throughout the country by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 3.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh said the focus on housing estates would be to encourage the residents to plant trees.

"The campaign will be the starting point in efforts to draw everyone's participation in tree-planting in realising the government's aspirations to make Malaysia a Garden Nation," he said at a news conference, here today.

During the launching at Taman Rekreasi Medan Idaman, Jalan Ibu Kota Kanan, Gombak here, Dr Mahathir will highlight the government's policies and aspirations on several issues relating to the greening of the country.

He will also present certificates and seedlings to state representatives as a symbol and commitment of the state governments towards the greening efforts.

Dr Ting said the campaign jointly organised by the ministry and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) would be held at the national and state level as well as that of the local authorities.

The highlight of the launching ceremony would be the planting of 33 trees to be led Dr Mahathir and followed by government leaders, professional bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

At the state level, tree-planting would be performed by Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers while at the local authorities level, Datuk Bandar or council presidents.

He said all government agencies, NGOs, factories, schools, housing estates and members of the public would be encouraged to plant trees in their respective areas at the same time.

They could plant the trees in the open space, public parks, government land along the roads, river banks, coast, factory compound and housing areas.

He estimated some 5,000 trees would be planted simultaneously throughout the country on the launching day with the long term target of three million trees by the year 2000 and 20 million trees by 2020.

The estimate was based on the participation of 15 per cent of the population in the campaign, he said.

Dr Ting said the public could contact the National Landscape Department and Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) on suitable species of trees for their areas.

The recommended species are "Sentang" (*Azadirachta Excelsa*), "Merawan Siput Jantan" (*Hopea Odarata*), "Janda Merana" (*Salix Babylonica*), "Simpuh" (*Dellinia Indica*), "Kelumpang" (*Sterculia Foetida*), "Jambu Laut" (*Eugenia Grandis*), "Tecoma" (*Tabebuia Pentaphylla*), "Kayu Manis" (*Canniamomum Iners*), "Kasai" (*Pometia Pinnata*) and "Pulai" (*Alstonia Augustiloba*).

Earlier, the minister and his two deputies Datuk Mohamad Tajol Rosli Mohd Ghazali and Peter Chin Fah Kui attended a joint Chinese New Year and Hari Raya Aidilfitri reception together with the staff.

-- BERNAMA

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