

19 APR 1998

Mahathir-Gratitude

FULLY DEVELOP YOUR LAND, SAYS PM

KOTA TINGGI, April 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the people in the country should fully develop the land and estates belonging to them to show their gratitude to the Almighty.

He said that those who were truly grateful would prove it by striving to make full use of their land.

"This is what it should be. To show our gratitude, we should fully maximise the use of our fertile land," he said when launching the Johor Education Foundation's National Ruminant in Estates Integrated Programme, near here.

Dr Mahathir said that it was not enough just to show interest in plant growing.

Concerted efforts should be made to obtain as much as possible from the land, he said.

"Our country is so blessed...the soil is fertile and there is plenty of rainfall and sunshine. We are not faced with disasters like in other countries and as such, cultivation of crops should be no problem," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that it was easy to utter gratitude but this should be proven by hard work and determination.

The people should show their gratitude for God's blessings to fully cultivate their land to further increase their produce, he said.

"By striving to cultivate the land, it shows that we are grateful and our lives will be blessed," he said.

Referring to the programme, he said that it should be well received as livestock like cattle could be bred in estates without much supervision.

He said that the returns were also quite lucrative.

At the function, Dr Mahathir handed over calves to several plantation companies including Sime Darby and Guthrie and to the Kota Tinggi Livestock Breeders Association and the Johor Estates Association to undertake the programme.

Among those present were Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, Agriculture Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

In his speech, Abdul Ghani said that Johor has the potential to breed 50,000 head of cattle a year under the integrated programmes in oil palm estates.

At present, there are over one million hectares of palm oil plantations which have been identified as suitable for the programme.

However, Abdul Ghani said only Felcra, Felcra and small estate-owners have responded positively to the programme.

He said private estate owners gave the excuses that such a programme required substantial manpower to watch the cattle, that the cattle would damage the oil palm roots and the commercial viability is doubtful.

-- BERNAMA

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