

15 MAY 1998

Mahathir-Fund

MAHATHIR, SITI HASMAH CHIP IN RM125,000 FOR NATIONAL FUND

KUALA LUMPUR, May 15 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali have donated foreign currencies and jewellery worth RM125,000 to the Special National Fund.

Treasury deputy secretary-general Datuk Syed Danial Syed Ahmad said the items would be auctioned soon and the monetary value is expected to be higher than the actual worth.

He said Dr Mahathir donated foreign currencies of various countries worth RM15,000 while Dr Siti Hasmah also gave foreign currencies and jewellery valued at RM40,000 and a set of diamonds costing RM70,000.

The buyer of Dr Mahathir's contributions would be given a special certificate with the prime minister's signature on it to signify that the items were collections of the country's leader, he told reporters at the Treasury today.

The fund was launched on March 6 to collect contributions from the public to help the country tide over the economic slowdown.

The government appointed Bank Simpanan Nasional as the receiving agent for local and foreign currencies while Bank Islam dan Bank Rakyat were charged with accepting valuables.

Syed Danial said Dr Mahathir's contribution should be an exemplary to the people in efforts to stimulate the country's economy.

He said the fund had received donations in the form of foreign currencies and jewellery worth RM2.6 million.

Due to the encouraging response, collections for the fund, which was to end on April 6, had been extended till July 6, he said.

He expected the proceeds to touch RM1 billion as other states particularly Pulau Pinang and Johor are keen to launch the fund soon.

Syed Danial said jewellery with cultural values like those used for weddings would be melted and sold to a company in Switzerland when the gold price goes up.

He said this would be done on the advice of Bank Negara.

He said those who want to donate foreign currencies in smaller denominations could do so through certain designated associations.

He also said those wishing to donate in big amounts need not worry as they would not be queried from where the money originated from.

" What's important is that the money is used to boost the country's reserve to revitalise the economy," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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