

25 OCT 1998

Mahathir-resources

USE DOMESTIC ASSETS TO BOOST INCOME, URGES DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians of all levels should utilise locally available assets and resources to deal with the current economic problems.

One approach would be to undertake research and development (R&D) programmes to enhance local capabilities in various fields, especially in the food industry, he said.

The prime minister said this when launching a high-grade fertiliser which is part of the "Terus Maju" range of agricultural products manufactured by Syarikat Kumpulan Maju at the Padi Musuem in Pantai Cenang here today.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians would have to exploit all available resources as this approach would go a long way in steering the country towards economic recovery and in minimising dependence on imported goods.

Malaysia is currently spending substantially on food imports.

"If we can cut down on food imports, I'm confident we can reduce our import bills and save on foreign exchange thus contributing towards national economic recovery," he said.

The prime minister said research into ways to boost farming output should be perennial and he was confident that the timely introduction of the Terus Maju range of products would be well-received by all those involved in the agricultural sector.

He said even the government would be willing to use the company's fertiliser as farming aid for the sector if the product's yield-enhancing qualities, as claimed, are proven.

"In the past, if a bomoh (medicine man) for instance, has an effective cure for an ailment, chances are he will be selfishly secretive about it," he said.

But today's society would no longer keep an idea a secret but would rather develop it into a product and market it later, he said.

In this context, Dr Mahathir suggested that the high-grade Terus Maju fertiliser be marketed overseas to add to the country's export earnings.

He said locally-manufactured organic fertilisers have a better edge over chemical fertilisers which could be destructive to soils and consequently, the environment.

Dr Mahathir said by simple progression, if it was true that the Terus Maju fertiliser could enhance farm yield by 35 per cent, he was convinced that the country would be 35 per cent better off than before in terms of food production.

Meanwhile, in his speech Maju Group executive chairman Datuk Abu Sahid Mohamed said the product has peculiar characteristics that could bring about sustainable farming with increased returns.

He said based on more than 1,000 experiments done so far the product could rejuvenate all types of crops and accelerate their growth and maturity.

Abu Sahid said the product has been patented in Malaysia and he claimed it is safe for humans besides being able to neutralise residual pesticides and reduce production costs by as much as 25 per cent.

-- BERNAMA

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