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Rubber-Subsidy

RUBBER SMALLHOLDERS APPEAL TO PM FOR SUBSIDY

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 10 (Bernama) -- The National Association of Smallholders (Nash) today called on Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to give serious consideration to their request for a rubber subsidy.

Nash president Datuk Haji Ahmad Arshad said the request, which was sent direct to the prime minister, was for 50 sen per kilogramme of rubber sold by the smallholders or rubber tappers to help ease the burden of the smallholders.

"The subsidy can be withdrawn when the rubber price recovers and stabilises," he told a news conference, here.

He said the special RM80 million rubber purchase scheme launched by the government in May to buy wet scrap rubber at 73 sen per kg and dry scrap at RM1.46 per kg from the smallholders was not enough because of the high cost of daily essentials now.

Besides, the rubber traders made huge cuts and gave low prices which were not in accordance with the levels fixed by the government.

Ahmad Arshad said a rubber subsidy was given by the government in 1974 when the rubber prices plunged while a subsidy in the form of coupons for each acre of rubber land was given in the 1920s.

Countries like Japan, the United States and Taiwan also had such a practice, he said.

He said his visits and meetings with the smallholders recently found that generally they remained poor, earning about RM200 a month.

-- BERNAMA

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