

22 MAR 2001

Mahathir-MBs

MBs,CMS DISCUSS BETTER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

PUTRAJAYA, March 22 (Bernama) -- The 82nd meeting of Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers at the Prime Minister's Office here today discussed measures to raise the efficiency of the government financial machinery especially settlement of government-private sector debts.

The three-hour meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, also discussed the current state of the national economy, according to a statement issued by the Office of the Prime Minister later.

The meeting discussed as well government efforts to diversify food resources for domestic consumption and export as well as measures to generate greater foreign direct investment.

All menteri besar except that of Kelantan and Terengganu and all chief ministers except that of Sabah and Sarawak attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman when approached by reporters later said Dr Mahathir directed all menteri besar and chief ministers to ensure speedy completion of projects in their state.

"This will enable prompt progress payment so that suppliers get paid and the multiplier effects from revolving expenditure could sustain our economic growth," Abdul Ghani said.

Such approach would be crucial in dealing with problems arising from the current international economic situation, especially the United States' economy, he said.

According to Abdul Ghani, Dr Mahathir also urged state governments to adopt measures that would ensure social development projects such as low-cost public housing benefited all and not only a segment of society.

"This is to prevent any part of society from being displaced or marginalised from the mainstream of national development," said Abdul Ghani.

The prime minister also asked state governments not to let any group to feel it was being ignored in the pursuit of growth and advancement in the wake of complaints by certain segments of society of late that they were being neglected.

"We've also been asked to monitor that development benefits have permeated through to each community group," Abdul Ghani added.

-- BERNAMA

SR AFY RYN