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BUDGET-FELDA
FELDA TO BE LISTED ON KLSE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today announced that Felda would be listed on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.

He said that Felda being the largest plantation group had a great potential of becoming an international brand while its shares could join the league of bluechips in the KLSE.

With the listing, Felda would be able to get capitalisation from the market and would no longer have to depend on the government for its financial resources, Dr Mahathir said when presenting the 2004 Budget at the Dewan Rakyat today.

At the same time, he said the government would also see returns from the listing which would benefit the Felda group, settlers, cooperatives and the state government that had provided the land for the development of Felda plantations.

The Prime Minister said that Felda settlers would also get the opportunity to hold equities in the listed company as members and individuals.

According to him, the proposal to list Felda on the KLSE was in line with the New Economic Policy (DEB) that aimed to enable Bumiputeras own at least 30 percent equity in the corporate sector.

"It is hoped that these shares would not be sold by the Bumiputeras," he said.

Dr Mahathir also hoped that the Second Amanah Saham Fund, Dana Harapan, would be established as a step towards expanding the opportunities to invest, especially for Bumiputeras through share trust funds.

The fund would be managed by a professional and experienced fund manager who would pool the resources and capital of Bumiputeras.

The Prime Minister said that the government had a lot of high-value assets that were yet to fully capitalised and in order to maximise returns the government would take the steps to unlock these assets.

This would directly increase the government's financial resources while providing specific groups the opportunity to use the assets to generate returns and contribute to the economic growth, Dr Mahathir said. -- MORE

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