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It's 19th century': Dr. M

Govt to pep up the Civil Service

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The Government intends to improve its administrative machinery by using modern management techniques, Deputy Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad** said today.

He said the country's administration was still largely based on "19th Century methods" and a thorough study was being carried out to upgrade efficiency and productivity in all ministries and departments.

Speaking to reporters after chairing a National Land Council meeting at Parlia-

ment House here this morning, he said there were about 80,000 Federal posts still vacant.

Figures on the manpower shortage in the States are not available until State Governments submit their reports.

Main reason

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said the shortage had been the main reason behind complaints of ineffective land management.

The Federal vacancies amounted to more than 10 per cent of the Third Malaysia

Plan target to create 750,000 jobs, he said.

The figures cited were for positions already approved by the Government. The actual number of officers and staff requested by the various departments was considerably higher.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said as a first step, the present administration would have to be improved.

Thorough studies would be conducted to determine the exact present and projected manpower requirement.

The special unit in the Prime Minister's Department — the Administrative Modernisation and Manpower Planning Unit — would monitor and co-ordinate the project, which included training programmes to fill the vacancies.

The project envisaged the greater use of computers, accumulation of data by a centralised data-bank system and refined management techniques such as work-flow and time-span analysis.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said the National Land Council discussed the preparation of proper training programmes for land officers and the creation of a national integrated land administration system.

The Government, he said, was anxious to have more data on land ownership.

New laws

It is understood that there is a backlog of about 70,000 cases on transfer of ownership to heirs and survivors of deceased persons. Land alienation cases still pending are said to number just as much.

The meeting decided that Mentris Besar and Chief Ministers would play a more effective role by visiting land offices in their States to determine the extent of the problem.

A special briefing will be held soon for them to be familiar with the various aspects of land administration.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said the Government planned to introduce a set of laws covering the issue of strata titles for new high-rise apartment buildings.

The move is aimed at protecting prospective buyers of multi-storey apartment units, where titles to the units have been sold before construction begins.

In at least one recent case, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said, the building project failed after some buyers had paid up to 50 per cent of the price. "They were left literally in possession of air space a few hundred feet above the ground," he added.

On the squatter problem, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said the meeting expressed concern over the issue of temporary occupation permits (TOP) by certain Government bodies for unused land in municipal council areas.

This had led to the construction of buildings which did not conform to the by-laws.