

PM's reminder on development

Ensure better quality life for the people

NST 76 JUL 1989

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The construction industry must concern itself not only with higher productivity and efficiency, but also with safety, the aesthetics and the environment.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who gave this reminder today said a strong construction industry could assist the country achieve economic growth.

At the same time, however, the industry could also help mould a better environment for the society's healthy growth, physically and spiritually — which form part of development and a better quality of life for all.

"The construction industry is a critical sector for economic growth," he said when opening the 20th convention of the International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractors' Association (IFAWPCA).

"But economic growth is not all that we are concerned with. We want growth but we also want a better life, which is beyond mere growth.

"With rapid development, greater efforts must be made to ensure that our surroundings are clean and beautiful."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said having concrete all round, without cleanliness and beautification would make the environment drab and depressing.

The greatest menace

However, he added, elaborate landscaping and rock gardens were not the total answer. Mere trees and green lungs, free from waste and rubbish, to break the monotony of the concrete would be good enough.

He warned: "Man and the waste he creates is the greatest menace to the environment. Man the builder must design buildings and the environment to contain this menace."

He urged contractors and the owners of factories and office premises to co-operate with the Government in implementing the cleanliness and beautification programmes.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also touched on transfer of technology, an issue the Government is greatly concerned with.

He commended the IFAWPCA on its aims at fostering close relations between contractors and Governments as well as the exchange of information on construction technology.

He said: "Transfer of technology is not easy; the transferor must assist the transferee to make the necessary preparation to enable a smooth and effective transfer to take place."

He added that rigidity and selfishness on the part of the technologically advanced construction establishments can stifle the industry in the long run and affect the establishments themselves.