

\$5m START FOR FUND

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — A foundation dedicated to wiping out poverty got off to a flying start when it was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

Donations and pledges totalling \$5.2 million were received for the foundation, Yayasan Gerakbakti Pemuda, including \$500,000 which Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir donated on behalf of the Federal Government.

Umno Youth, which started the foundation, donated \$100,000 while the ruling Berjaya party of Sabah gave \$500,000 and the other State Governments donated a total of \$560,000.

The foundation is open to youths of all races and aims to complement and supplement government efforts to eradicate poverty.

Money also came in from, among others, Promet Malaysia (\$1 million), Encik Ghafar Baba on behalf of several companies he represents (\$1 million), Lipkland Holdings (\$250,000), Malayan United Industries (\$250,000), Sapura Holdings (\$100,000) and Tan Sri Lim Goh Tong (\$250,000). Donations from those who wished to remain anonymous totalled \$415,000.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, in launching the foundation at the Dewan Tunku Chancellor, University of Malaya, called on the people to change their attitudes on poverty.

"You cannot make poverty disappear by living in fantasy and believing that invoking magic words will make it disappear. Poverty can only be overcome by our own efforts.

"What is needed is a change of attitude — from merely mouthing slogans and depending on others to actually playing a more positive and concrete role in overcoming this challenge," he added.

Umno Youth leader Encik Anwar Ibrahim said that the money raised by the foundation would be used to help overcome poverty in rural and urban areas.

The foundation, he said, would help anyone who was in need, irrespective of his race.

ask ourselves is what is preventing us from working hard and overcoming challenges? This country is full of natural resources and if we are prepared to work hard and change our attitudes, there is no reason for unemployment or poverty to exist here," he said.

The Prime Minister also stressed that merely giving donations to the poor was not enough. "I am not running down those who make donations, in fact I am thankful to them for helping, but more is needed. We must make extra efforts.

"If Someone is starving food, he will finish the food and be full for a while. But if he becomes hungry again.

"But if we teach that starving person to fish and provide a rod and line, he will be able to catch his own fish. And that fish, cooked even without spices or salt, will taste better than what we give him. He will also never go hungry again."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir added that the poor must be thought to fend for themselves and with the proper skills training and attitude, they would be able to overcome their situation.

"The reason is because we are not prepared to carry out our duties and work hard but instead depend on others.

"It was because we were not prepared to work that foreigners had to be brought into the country in those days. These foreigners filled the vacancies, and reaped their rewards and bettered their living conditions.

"Then we become envious and say, how is it that we are still backward in our own country but the foreigners have become better off than us.

"The question we must