

# PM: We are not out to oppress, belittle & anyone

By NURAINA SAMAD

KUALA TERENGGANU, Wed. -- The Government is not out to oppress or belittle anyone in its continued efforts to instil a strong sense of discipline in the people.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, declaring this today, said the Government believed that a lot could be achieved in the country for the benefit and well-being of the rakyat through discipline.

"It is not for the benefit of the Government, leaders or Ministers in power. It is for the country and the rakyat. We do not wish to control or belittle anyone. This is not our intention. Discipline is vital for progress," he told about 10,000 people who had thronged the residence of Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Wan Mokhtar Ahmad.

Dr Mahathir said a country whose people were disciplined and hardworking would be highly respected by other countries.

"If we adhere to these values -- of discipline, trustworthiness, integrity and hard work -- no one can belittle us."

He said the Government always had the rakyat in mind when implementing any plan.

Speaking at length on discipline, the Prime Minister, said even though the country had developed rapidly since independence, there was still much to be done.

## Blind scholar

"That is why we need to be disciplined in order to attain our goals. Time is precious. We cannot afford to waste it. It is God-given. It is the reason we ask you to come to work on time, work a little longer. It is all for the better, I assure you."

Touching on the Government's economic programmes to eradicate poverty, Dr Mahathir urged the people to be more hardworking and to take advantage of the opportunities "open to them."

"We must often ask ourselves why a person is rich. Did he inherit his wealth or did he work hard to attain it? If we carry out our responsibility with determination and perseverance, we can surely reduce poverty."

The people must help themselves in order to improve their economic status.

"Opportunities are there. The Government provides the opportunity for Malaysians, irrespective of race, to progress economically. But it must be through your own efforts and perseverance."

Dr Mahathir said that as long as a person was fit, he should work hard to better himself economically, adding that even handicapped people were given opportunities to improve themselves.

He cited the example of a blind Malaysian scholar who worked hard to obtain a doctorate from a university in the United States.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, was welcomed on arrival by a crowd of

15,000. He was met at the Sultan Mahmud airport by Datuk Haji Wan Mokhtar, Agriculture Minister Datuk Manan Osman, parliamentary secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Haji Awang Jabar, members of the State Government and State Assemblymen.