

# Paying for the good life

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — There is no way that Malaysians can have a good lifestyle without paying for it, the Prime Minister said today.**

(Datuk Seri Dr Mshathir Mohamad said Malaysians had to pay for progress because poverty could only be defeated if enough people "made money legitimately" and pay taxes to enable the Government to launch development schemes to upgrade the productivity of the poor.

Without being specific, he said some people wanted a good lifestyle without paying for it. He described such people as "some quite intelligent Malaysians with a certain degree of naivete".

"They say that we can have the standard of living similar to that of developed countries and we can have that for free... we have these people demanding that we have the best of everything, the best schools, hospitals, pay schemes, pensions, environment...

"And that we preserve our forest, historical buildings... In addition we should lower taxes, pay no tolls, work shorter hours, throw out local and foreign investors and everything that may raise money for the nation and the Government."

He was speaking at the 38th annual meeting of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM).

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was a relatively

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poor country which could not afford certain things developed countries could.

"The fact is even if we want them we have to pay for them. The payments may not be direct but in the end we must pay.

"If we want to preserve Malaysia in its natural state with its tropical forests, animals and attap huts, then we must be prepared to live without the amenities that we now take for granted... this is the price we have to pay."

Dr Mahathir said the "most detestable thing" is when city dwellers earning fat salaries "shed tears" over the way the countryside has been spoilt and the bucolic life of the peasants disturbed.

"In the same breath they would lament over rural poverty... and after they have shed the crocodile tears, they would retreat to the air-conditioned comforts of their city houses and offices."

Dr Mahathir reiterated that the Government would not deflect from its approach of eradicating poverty through increased productivity by the poor.

"Dole does not eradicate poverty... like drugs, it reduces people to becoming dependents."