

Our crying shame

—by Mahathir

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By KHAIRUDDIN HASAN

ALOR STAR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is aghast at the condition of public toilets in the country.

"The awful stench of our toilets, any public toilet, is becoming the 'hallmark' of Malaysia among the tourists.

"I am ashamed with the condition of our (public) toilets because they are being used by foreigners from time to time."

Dr Mahathir said this while addressing State Government officers at Wisma Negeri yesterday.

"There is nobody to blame but those who use them. Perhaps our people are still not used to modern toilets. Maybe they still have to use the kind of toilets at the back of homes."

At certain schools he visited he found the

Condition of public toilets shocking, says PM

toilets locked.

"When I asked that the toilets be opened, I found all the sinks broken. When I asked the

school authorities where the students go to ease themselves, they told me the place was along the fences.

"Do we spend huge sums of money to build beautiful and modern toilets to be locked up to ensure that they are not destroyed?"

"This shows that our people are still not familiar with modern toilets and they prefer to ease themselves at the fences."

Dr Mahathir is unhappy with the level of cleanliness in Alor Star despite steps taken to beautify the town.

"I want the cleanliness of the drains in the town to be taken care of."

Cleanliness is not a question of Government policies. It depends on the con-

sciousness of the individuals.

"It is not the responsibility of the Government or the Public Works Department alone. Everyone must participate. I hope Alor Star will be cleaner the next time I come around."

The Prime Minister also called for the setting up of recreation camps for students during school breaks.

The private sector must be encouraged to not just establish the camps but also provide directors of recreation to draw up programmes for the students.

"This way we can keep the students occupied during the holidays. We can teach them about our flora and fauna, to be adventurous and tough."