

# Urban growth: Govt doing its best

**NST - 8 AUG 1985**

PETALING JAYA, Wed. — The Government cannot afford to preserve everything in the interests of nostalgia and those who oppose the growth of a city are being unrealistic, the Prime Minister said tonight.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was not necessary that the growth and development of a city

should be hideous and polluting as feared by some people.

In the development of Kuala Lumpur, he said, the Government had tried to preserve the landmarks and beautify the surroundings with trees, flower-beds and landscaping.

"There is much yet to be done but I believe we have just managed to save Kuala Lumpur from being a collection of giant matchboxes standing upright which is what most cities are today," the Prime Minister told the Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) at its annual dinner.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Works Minister Datuk Samy Vellu, and the Datuk Bandar Datuk Dr Elyas Omar.

He said landowners and developers who opposed the conservationists and the environmentalists only wanted to squeeze as much area into their projects as possible.

"That the city is already congested and ugly is of no interest to them. They want to maximise their earnings," he said.

The problem for the city fathers, he said, was to balance the objections of the environmentalists and conser-

# Resilience means riding out bad times: Dr M

★ FROM PAGE ONE  
viationists with the need to be fair to the property-owners and developers and this was not an easy task.

Dr Mahathir said the Government was not as callous and arbitrary as some people made it out to be.

"We are concerned. We are concerned with the environment and conservation as much as we are concerned to see that everyone gets the wealth due to him," he added.

The Prime Minister stressed that though preoccupied with rural development and the era-

dication of poverty, the Government was not neglecting urban development.

The Government is also looking for the right agency to conduct research into the need to provide shade in the city apart from the planting of more trees.

He urged all owners of buildings, architects and landscape artists to give their support to the tree-planting and landscaping efforts.

Dr Mahathir spoke of the need to preserve some of the old shophouses to remind the people of the city's old character.

He said that over-building could also be danger-

ous. Those involved in construction borrowed with the expectation of repaying the loans with income derived from their buildings. If there are no takers for the buildings then they are in trouble.

The Government did not want to see anyone lose money as it affected the country's economy and revenue.

"It is because of this that we try to limit loans for building construction. It is in your interest and you should support it," he said.

Such an action, he said, might cause architects who had invested a great deal in their firms to have less work.

However, they should bear in mind that in business there had to be ups and downs.

"The thing to do is to always provide for a rainy day and to tighten the belts when things are not as they should be. Disregarding recession or expecting it to be over soon is not the way to handle bad times."

He said though Malaysians were experiencing relatively bad times, it was not too bad compared with those in other countries.

The test of a country's resilience, he said, was in the ability of the private and public sectors to manage during bad times.