

# PM: FOREIGNERS WANT TO KEEP US AS CURIOS

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KUCHING, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that certain groups, particularly foreigners, want to keep the less developed communities in the country a subject for research and a "museum piece."

He cautioned the people not to be easily influenced by outsiders who wanted to instigate these communities to oppose government development.

He said these groups, from Europe, wanted Malaysia to remain backward so that they could come here and do their research and studies.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the Farmers and Fishermen's Day celebration at the State banquet hall here.

More than 1,000 farmers and fishermen from all over the country are attending the week-long celebration, which includes an agricultural exhibition.

Dr Mahathir said: "These foreigners want to see our people remain in the jungle hunting for food and farming in the jungle.

"They want the people not to wear clothes but just loincloths so that they can come and see Malaysians as primitive people.

"They claim that the people's tradition of not wearing shoes, being sick, and facing starvation must be preserved, and their life-style unchanged.

"These people come to Sarawak and stay in the jungles and influence the people to oppose development and condemn the Government.

"They are doing this because foreigners like anthropologists can come and do their research and study the people here," he said.

Dr Mahathir said just because of these researchers, the people had to suffer and be left out of the mainstream of development.

He said people of all races had the right to progress and enjoy the benefit of development.

Dr Mahathir pointed out that these groups wanted to see Malaysia remain backward because their countries had modernised and they did not know how a backward country looked like.

He said there was a group of people in the country who had been left behind in development and they were accepting changes but were being disturbed by foreigners.

Datuk Mahathir added that the Penans, Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazans and all other races in the country had the right to development.

He also advised farmers to be brave in accepting the changes in modern farming methods which would bring them better harvests and more income.

Dr Mahathir said farmers

should use the latest technology and use agricultural land for optimum productivity on a large scale.

He said the nation would not progress if people continued to develop their land the traditional way.

"People are more interested to have their names attached to their lands than go into joint ownership for efficient and diversified agricultural ventures.

"The country, being an agricultural nation, depends very much on farming," he said.

Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud called on the farmers not to depend on government assistance but instead try on their own to increase productivity.

He said he was sure that the master plan on the National Agricultural Policy would greatly benefit the State, especially the farming community.