

PM ASSURES FISHERMEN

Alien boats entering local waters will be detained

TUMPAT, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today gave an assurance that the Government would take stern action against foreign fishermen encroaching into Malaysian waters.

He said any foreign boat found fishing in the waters would be detained by the authorities.

Dr Mahathir added that the recent agreement between Malaysia and Thailand to co-operate in deep-sea fishing ventures should not worry fishermen.

He assured them that the relevant authorities would ensure that no foreign boats encroached into coastal waters, where small fishing boats fish.

The Prime Minister also urged fishermen to change their way of life in line with the country's development.

He appealed to the fishermen to venture into deep sea fishing to boost their incomes.

Speaking to more than 2,000 villagers in Kampung Geting here, Dr Mahathir said the Government had plans to train local fishermen in deep sea fishing.

"The Government will provide the fishermen with well equipped deep sea fishing boats to venture into the industry," he added.

He hoped the plan to train youths in deep sea fishing would be well received by

the fishing community.

On the standard of living of fishermen, he said, the Government had always wanted to uplift their livelihoods.

However, he stressed, the fishermen should first change their attitudes and ways of life.

He said the fishermen should give priority to cleanliness and work harder if they wanted to upgrade their living standards.

The Prime Minister urged the State Government to ascertain from the villagers their problems so that remedial programmes could be

introduced.

"The State Government will have to identify suitable projects that are acceptable to the villagers," added the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Mohamed Yaacob, Defence Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, State Exco members and Assemblymen.

Later Dr Mahathir visited Kampung Dalam Rhu and was given a warm welcome by more than 1,000 villagers.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said the fishermen must not rely solely on fishing to increase their incomes.

He told the fishermen to venture into other fields, such as small scale business.

Dr Mahathir also said all parties should endeavour to ensure the progress of the fishing community.

"The fishermen must play their part by changing their attitudes," he reiterated.