

Mahathir-development ""

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 29, (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he failed to understand why many urban people rejected the Barisan Nasional in elections when the coalition had provided them with much development.

The prime minister said these people should be thankful for being able to enjoy amenities such as roads, electricity and piped water and a life more comfortable than that of the rural people.

"I do not know what more they want because we have already given them various facilities," he told a gathering at the end of a five-hour visit of the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, in Bandar Tun Razak here.

"I hope the urban people will return the favour, and they should not reject those who always strive to help them," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister, Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, several deputy ministers and Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Elyas Omar were present. -- more

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional government always strived to provide the people with a comfortable place to live in, greater business opportunities and more jobs and undertook various efforts to enhance their living standard.

He cited Bandar Tun Razak as an example, saying that the one-time squatter settlement had developed rapidly into a modern township equipped with various amenities.

The prime minister said the prices of houses in the township now cost twice that paid by the residents then and this was a reflection of their living standard as well as the country's economy.

"The government has directly helped the people to acquire wealth and we can see most households even in squatter areas have cars, many rooms and various household items," he said.

He said the government hoped that all squatter areas, especially those in the city, would be made to look beautiful. -- more

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's visit of the Federal Territory began with the opening of a \$1.3 million market at Air Panas, Setapak, in the Titiwangsa parliamentary constituency.

Although the prime minister was not scheduled to speak, he did not disappoint the thousands of residents who had turned up despite a drizzle.

"The government pledges to help petty traders throughout the country by providing them places to conduct their business such as this market," he said.

He also said that \$50 million had been allocated to help petty traders.

From there, the prime minister proceeded to Batu Enam, Gombak, in the Batu parliamentary constituency to open Phases 1C and 3B of Kuala Lumpur City Hall's housing project.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and his wife entered the flat of Encik Salim Baba, a 29-year-old City Hall worker, on the ground floor of the "Sri Langkawi" block of flats and had a brief conversation with the family.

He then went to the first floor verandah and spoke, also outside his schedule. -- more

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He said the government implemented such housing projects to enable the people of various races to live in harmony.

It cost City Hall \$25,000 to build a low-cost unit which was sold at only \$22,000, he said.

+This reflects the government's commitment to provide as many houses as possible to the people in Kuala Lumpur and elsewhere in the country,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir then proceeded to the Kepong constituency to launch a phase of the Bandar Menjalara housing project and to the Sungai Besi constituency to launch a shophouse project in Jalan Kuchai Lama.

The prime minister told newsmen at the end of his visit, in Bandar Tun Razak, that he was happy with the warm welcome accorded by the people during the visit.

+God willing, with the hard work of the Barisan Nasional component parties and the people's appreciation for what the government has done for them, I am confident that we will achieve victory,+ he said. -- Bernama