

# PM: Develop kampungs systematically

By Robert Goh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The Prime Minister today called for a more systematic development of kampungs to raise the standard of living of its inhabitants.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said kampungs had been the nucleus for the growth of urban settlements, and Kuala Lumpur itself had grown from a mining village to become the nation's capital, now known throughout the world.

Speaking at the launching of the Information Ministry's *Kampungku* programme, he said there was

no reason why other kampungs could not be preserved and grow like Kuala Lumpur.

However, kampung folk must also take steps in this direction by keeping their villages clean and changing their way of life.

The Prime Minister later told a Press conference that Malay kampungs, for example, had developed in a haphazard manner and there were previously no proper roads, electricity and water supply.

"Houses were built back to front and it was difficult to supply public amenities to them.

"And in Sabah and Sara-

wak, the members of a family may clear a forest area to grow hill padi, build a home and then ask for the provision of water and electricity supply.

"This is inefficient unless many such houses are

**SEE ALSO PAGE 3**

grouped together to form a bigger settlement."

Better economies would be obtained if several small kampungs could be grouped together, and this is what the Government is planning to do.

Dr Mahathir added that the restructuring of kampung development would

be carried out in stages according to the ability of the kampungs and the Government so as to minimise expenditure.

He said some of the traditional ways of life in the kampungs would have to go in the process.

"One tradition is for farmers planting padi once a year to work only six months, while fishermen would just sleep in their houses and not go fishing during the monsoon season.

"But if this continues, the farmers will die of starvation and the fishermen will have no income during the rainy season."

He said the Government would not dole out aid to kampung folk to the extent that they would not become self-reliant.

Earlier, the Prime Minister, accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, was given a kompong welcome on arrival at Angkasapuri. They were received by Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat and his deputy Railey Jeffiey.

The *Kampungku* project, which aims, among others, to instil in rural people the desire to progress, is a continuation of the Ministry's *Setia* and *Semarak* campaigns.