

# Penang is rubbish bin of Orient, says PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Penang should be referred to as the rubbish bin of the Orient because it is dirty, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The State Government should be blamed for this because it wanted to be popular with the people, Dr Mahathir said.

The State Government was hesitant in enforcing policies which might make it unpopular, the Prime Minister said in a strongly-worded response when asked by newsmen to comment on the dirty state of affairs on the island.

The Prime Minister was asked to respond to numerous comments appearing in local dailies which pointed to the various levels of filth in Penang.

The problem hinged on politics — that there are politicians in the State who go against the authorities

when they want to enforce laws on cleanliness.

In doing so, they appear to be popular among the people and make the State Government appear unpopular, he said.

But the Prime Minister said the clean-up drive in Penang would continue because this is the right thing to do.

What is important is that foreigners visiting the island should continue to refer to Penang as the Pearl of the Orient and not the rubbish bin of the Orient, he said.

On the other hand, in the case of Kuala Lumpur, Dr Mahathir said the Government emphasised cleanliness and beautification and strict enforcement of laws.

"We do not place that much importance on winning the elections in Kuala Lumpur and the result is a cleaner and beautiful city," he said.