

# PM: Kampung people must be ready to accept changes

By Jeffrey Ramayah

PORT DICKSON, Sun. — The Government's vision of attaining the status of a developed country by the year 2020 would be meaningless if the kampungs in the country were allowed to remain as they are, the Prime Minister said here today.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said efforts must be made by both the Government and the people to convert kampungs into modern and properly-structured townships in keeping with the rapid changes that are expected to take place.

Launching the Negri Sembilan State-level *Kampungku* programme at Kampung Jimah Baru near here, Dr Mahathir said the Government would draw up development plans for the various kampungs and provide the necessary infrastructure.

He said it was pointless to further develop major towns leaving the kampungs in their current state while trying to achieve the status of a developed country 30 years from now.

"But it is the efforts of the people that matter most because without their involvement success cannot be achieved.

"The people in the kampungs must be prepared to accept changes and the challenges that will come with development," he said.

Dr Mahathir said kampungs could be developed into modern townships and this had been proven.

He cited Kuala Lumpur as an example, saying that the then small mining village was developed into the nation's capital city which is now the centre of trade and industry.

He said the modern and

sophisticated Kuala Lumpur was the result of the people living in the city who wanted to live and progress in a better environment where their incomes through trade and business could be increased tremendously.

"Kampungs too can be developed into modern towns providing much more opportunities for trade and industry."

Dr Mahathir said the people must strive to make the Government's vision a success so that Malaysians would be able to enjoy a much more comfortable life.

The Government was doing its best to help the poor to generate more income through various programmes such as Felda and Risdas where the kampung people were given land to cultivate crops.

"We provide education for

the urban and the rural people with the aim of producing knowledgeable citizens who could use education to derive a steady income."

Dr Mahathir said the people should not isolate themselves from development and should actively participate in programmes aimed at uplifting the living standards of all Malaysians.

He said the Government had to collect various types of taxes and duties from the people because it was only through such collection that the authorities could help the poor.

Dr Mahathir also said the people must give up the attitude of thinking only for the present.

He added this was why the Government has systematic development programmes for the country over the next 30 years.