

PM: Condos to be way of city living

1 JUN 1991

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Condominiums will be the way of living in the city in future and those wanting to enjoy the privacy of a bungalow will have to own such homes outside Kuala Lumpur, the Prime Minister said today.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government would continue to allow condominiums to be built so that the people who work in Kuala Lumpur can live comfortably in the city while paying for their own security and recreational facilities.

He said the rich who want to live in bungalows with large areas of land can build them outside city limits similar to country homes in the developed countries.

"We will allow condominiums with modern and sophisticated facilities because if more and more people live in bungalows outside city limits and travel to work, we will be faced with worsening traffic congestion," he told reporters after chairing the first meeting of the Cabinet committee formed to look into the development of Kuala Lumpur.

He said the bungalows outside city limits should be used as countryside homes.

Dr Mahathir said it must be remembered that the population of the city was increasing rapidly and if bungalows were allowed to be built, there would be further land constraints, adding to the existing shortage of land within the city.

He said condominiums would be better managed and owners would have to pay for their own security and recreational facilities.

"This would reduce Government expenditure in providing for these facilities.

"People who live in bungalows in the city have complained that others living in high rise buildings intrude into their privacy by the use of telescopes.

"People living in Kuala Lumpur must realise that there are hazards of city living and if they want such comfortable homes, they can do so outside the city."

Dr Mahathir said the Government could not give a full guarantee on privacy.

He also said the Government would take steps to prevent developers from using foreign names for condominiums and housing estates.

The Prime Minister said it

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Government against foreign names for housing projects

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must be made clear that condominiums were not meant only for the higher income groups, adding that they should be within the reach of the middle income group as well.

"Those who cannot afford it must remember they have to live that way unless they can work harder and derive more income in order to be able to live more comfortably.

"The Government will control the prices of condominiums but they cannot be too lowly prices because then even squatters will be able to live in condominiums," he said.

He said there was also a proposal to establish restricted zones whereby motorists entering these areas would have to pay a fee.

He said this proposal was being looked into although it was made several years ago.

On the squatter problem,

Dr Mahathir said the Government had feelings towards its people and did not want to take harsh action.

"We always give quit notices and even pay compensation but these squatters who had been directed to vacate chose not to do so.

"In some countries, those squatter homes are demolished without compensation.

"Here, we even build long houses for the squatter families but some choose to continue to live in their existing huts," he said.

When asked what would Kuala Lumpur be like when Malaysia achieved its vision 2020 and attained the status of a developed country, Dr Mahathir said he could foresee the nation's capital city being beautiful, clean and having a good transportation system.

"We will see a city that is occupied by responsible people who earn good incomes and who do not litter the streets," he said.

He said Kuala Lumpur should not be like some cities in developed countries which were dirty.

Dr Mahathir said City Hall would be preparing a giant-sized map indicating the developed areas and areas identified for development to help authorities overcome the various problems including congestion.

He said from the map, the authorities would know immediately which road has to be widened or which area has to be immediately developed.

Dr Mahathir said the people in the city must be prepared to pay for the facilities provided.

"The Government has to spend \$1 billion just to provide infrastructure for the city.

"If the people do not pay, the Government has to subsidise. Those who live in big towns would have to pay more for the facilities," he said.