

# We won't rob people of their land: PM

PRAI, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government would not use amendments to the Land Acquisition Act to "rob" people of their property.

"The country's population will increase to 70 million in 60 years but the land area will not grow. We always consider the plight of the people, especially the lower income group.

"The Government is not blind (to these problems) as we have the interest of the people at heart," the Prime Minister told reporters after opening a factory here.

Dr Mahathir was referring to criticisms over amendments to the Act, which were being used by the DAP as an issue in the Prai by-election.

He said there would be insufficient land to meet

increasing demands for housing from the lower-income group.

"The DAP will make all kinds of claims but we are not robbing and taking people's land. It would be done in the interest of the people and the economy. We also have guidelines to check deviations," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said it was ridiculous for the DAP to claim that the Barisan Nasional had allocated \$50 million for the Prai by-election.

"Spend \$50 million just for one seat? It can be better utilised for other purposes," he said.

He claimed that DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang had left out the BMF scandal from his 10 points of alleged government corruption in Parliament recently because those involved were his

close friends.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said the audio-equipment manufacturing sector had given new depth to the electronics industry.

He said some 25,000 workers were involved in the industry, and total exports rose from \$653.8 million in 1986 to \$3.3 billion last year.

"The industry had paved the way for linkage opportunities with other sectors like plastic moulding, metal stamping, moulds and dies, packaging, labelling and transportation," he said.

He said 89 companies were approved for manufacturing audio equipment in late May. Sixty companies were given pioneer status, eight with investment tax allowance and 21 others with tax exemption benefits.