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MAHATHIR: ALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS NEED EIA APPROVAL

Mahathir-zoo

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 4 (Bernama) -- All development projects, including those at Kampung Kemensah, near Zoo Negara, need Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) approval before they are implemented, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

As long a project did not have approval from the EIA study undertaken by expert groups it could not be implemented, he added.

+It all depends on the EIA... whether the project is within the law,+ he told reporters after performing the ground breaking ceremony for Menara Kuala Lumpur at Bukit Nenas here.

The Prime Minister declined comment on the statement by the Sultan of Selangor that he did not agree with the golf course project at Kampung Kemensah for it was feared that it might affect the quality of the environment around the zoo area.

This morning, the Sultan said he would reject his monthly royal allowance of \$24,000 if the Selangor government went ahead with the golf course project. -- more

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said every development project in the country should take into account environmental factors and reports by expert groups should be given serious consideration.

+Assumptions that there will be pollution by people not assigned the task of making the assessment should not be taken as guidance,+ he added.

If certain people were dissatisfied with certain groups pertaining to the environment issue, then they probably had other aims or interests, the Prime Minister said.

-On the possibility of claims being made that the 420-metre Menara Kuala Lumpur was a waste of funds, he said: +If we are too preoccupied with such talk from people, then we can't do anything.+

The Prime Minister said he was made to understand that the Menara project, to be the tallest in Southeast Asia and the third tallest in the world, would not pose a hazard to air traffic. -- more

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The trees around the project site would not be felled unless they obstructed the project, he added.

Menara Kuala Lumpur, scheduled for completion in 1995, would house telecommunication equipment for all overseas and domestic services as well as data and picture transmission services.

Other facilities would include a revolving restaurant and handicraft shops for tourists.

Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, Health Minister Datuk Lee Kim Sai and Energy, Telecommunications and Post Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu were present at the ceremony.

The project is being undertaken by a consortium, Menara Kuala Lumpur Sdn Berhad in collaboration with the German firm of Wayss & Freytag AG. -- Bernama