

Give **your** share to the **poor**: Dr **M**

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians who have become affluent during the post-independence period and the implementation of the New Economic Policy have the responsibility to help the less fortunate.

Prime Minister ~~Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad~~ said yesterday the Government should not be totally relied upon to help the poor.

He said the Government always welcomed the gestures of individuals or the private sector to help the less fortunate.

"The donor who is sincere should not feel that the acceptor ought to be grateful to him," he said when launching the Ubaidi Foundation at **Pusat Islam** here.

Dr Mahathir said paying zakat was a novel idea for Muslims to ensure social justice because wealth acquired by those who could make the most of the opportunities was given to the poor.

Muslims, he said, should not just be takers but should strive for wealth as permitted by Islam.

Dr Mahathir said the concept of a welfare state in the West which paid its citizens for not doing work had made their society lazy.

"The concept has also led to the stagnation of development efforts and that even the most developed nation could become weak because of this," he said.

Dr Mahathir said only those who were genuinely poor should benefit from such assistance.

Those who had improved their financial standing should repay society for the opportunities made available to them, he said.