

Blind distribution of wealth ndt good for people, says PM

NST 18 JUL 1992

KUALA TERENGGANU, Fri. — The Government will not seek popularity by distributing its wealth to the rakyat blindly, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the Government would instead provide the necessary help and guidance to enable the people to improve their life and to become more self-reliant.

“The Government can simply distribute all its wealth to the people if it wanted to be popular,” he told a gathering at the opening of the Chalok sheep rearing farm in Setiu, about 70km from here.

“However, such an action will make them lazy and weak,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said the natural resources like oil and gas, which had contributed to be the nation's wealth, were not recoverable, and therefore over-dependence on them would place the people and the country at the mercy of others once the resources were depleted.

In this respect, he said Terengganu had spent its oil and gas royalty wisely to build basic infrastructure, like roads in rural areas, to enable the farmers to market their agricultural produce in urban centres.

He said Terengganu had not depended solely on the allocations from the Federal Government to build the roads.

Dr Mahathir also said the

people must work hard and think of various income-generating opportunities to achieve success in life and become respected citizens by others.

“If we do not want other people to call us a lazy race or to think lowly of us, we have to work hard not only to win their respect but to become a strong community,” he added.

Sheep rearing is one of the ways in which people in the rural areas, especially those with rubber smallholdings, can venture into to improve their income.

He said officers from the Agriculture Ministry based at the Chalok sheep rearing farm, could provide all the assistance and training to

farmers who wanted to rear sheep.

“The export market for sheep is big, especially in the Middle East countries. But we can only have enough sheep for export if farmers are willing to rear them.”

The Chalok farm, covering 500 hectares, is the second largest sheep rearing farm in the country and the best-managed compared to five other farms located in Kluang, which has the biggest farm, Negri Sembilan, Kedah, Selangor and Kelantan.

The number of sheep has increased from 100 heads to more than 2,500 heads to date and demand from local ouyers naà increased over

the years, especially during Hari Raya Haji.

In Kuala Besut earlier today, when addressing a Friday prayer congregation, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had no intention to dictate other nations but it was the responsibility of the Government to make the country a strong Islamic nation.

He said if the country was weak, other nations would, not respect its sovereignty and it could easily be dominated or dictated.

The Prime Minister had earlier visited the site of the extension project for the Royal Malaysian Air Force base at Gong Kedak and the Kuala Besut river estuary near here.