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Maha thir-poor

DO NOT FORGET THE POOR, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALALUMPUR, March 5 (Bernama) -- The hardcore poor should not be forgotten in the nation's efforts to become a developed country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"We must give the poor a chance to improve their economic potential because their success will help create a fair and just nation," he said in the souvenir programme for the launch of the "Ikhtiar Project Fund 1993" at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim launched the fund organised by the Malaysian Islamic Economic Foundation, Permodalan Nasional Berhad, Kumpulan Utusan Melayu (M) Berhad and Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM).

The fund, started in 1990, is aimed at getting contributions from companies, organisations and the public to be used as capital for those earning less than RM250 a month to engage in economic activities.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the government was always working to strengthen the spirit of self-reliance and competitiveness of its people, especially the poor, by increasing the socio-economic programmes and providing basic amenities. -- more

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Mahathir-poor 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

The fund, he said, was implemented to develop the hardcore poor through the economic approach.

"Cooperation between the public and private sectors in making the implementation of the fund a success shows the positive attitude and awareness of the people of the plight of the less fortunate," he added.

Anwar, in his foreword, said although the country's economic status had reached a level to be proud of, serious attention must be given to families living under the poverty line.

He said it was hoped that the fund would inculcate a sense of responsibility and caring for those in need of help to promote harmony, cooperation and goodwill in society. -- Bernama

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