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Mahathir-environment

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTED IN IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS, SAYS PM

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KUALA TERENGGANU, Sept 10 (Bernama) -- The government will protect the environment as best it can in implementing development projects, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We will protect the environment as best we can but not to the extent that our people have no jobs or food," he said during a visit to the RM325 million Redang Island Resort in Pulau Redang, near here.

He was commenting on the call by the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) that the second phase of the project be stopped for fear that it would affect the environment.

He said such bodies were only good at talking but had never given any assistance.

He said Malaysians who joined the organisation did not themselves care about the fate of the locals who needed jobs from the projects and better pay. -- more

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Mahathir-environment 2 (last) Kuala Terengganu

Dr Mahathir said 56 per cent of the country was still covered with forests and the area was 76 per cent if the estates were included.

He said Malaysia also had more trees per per sq mile compared with the western countries.

"We are not the people who damage the environment. We only want to earn a living," he said.

He said the western countries had a per capita income of US\$30,000 while that of Malaysia was only US\$3,000 and in fact they should help Malaysia.

He said that at Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the western countries had promised to set up a fund to help the poor countries but to date no assistance had been received.

The Redang Island Resort developed by a subsidiary of the Berjaya group on a 280ha site will have 252 hotel rooms and chalets and a golf course. --

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