

Co-operate to ensure development, says PM

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LANGKAWI, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants all the relevant authorities to co-operate positively to ensure the smooth implementation of development projects.

He said the relevant authorities should eliminate the negative habit of trying to show off their powers by taking unnecessary and overzealous actions which could hamper the progress of development projects.

Dr Mahathir said some authorities exercised their powers unnecessarily, put-

ting pressure on developers to conform to formalities and took action when developers failed to adhere to their directives.

"This is a negative and wrong attitude. We must give positive co-operation so that projects can be implemented speedily," the Prime Minister said when launching Ekran Berhad's RM1 billion Port Langkasuka project, a gigantic marina development scheme, at Kuala Muda.

Also present at the launching were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, Ekran Berhad executive chairman Datuk Ting Pek Khiing, Port Langka-

suka Development chairman Datuk Abdul Halil Mutalib and State Executive Councillors Datuk Abu Bakar Taib and Datuk Syed Razak Syed Zain Barakbah.

Dr Mahathir said development projects, including those in Langkawi, were for the benefit of the people, especially the people of Kedah.

"We should have a positive attitude towards this (project) by giving our full co-operation so that this project is implemented speedily," he said.

Dr Mahathir hoped nobody would stand in the way of the Port Langkasuka project which was scheduled to be completed in five years — but the Prime Minister hoped "Ting can complete it earlier".

Development projects in

Langkawi did not only benefit the people of Langkawi but all Malaysians.

The Government had spent nearly RM1 billion on the island on infrastructure — money that was contributed by the people who paid taxes.

Describing Langkawi as the fastest growing area in the nation, Dr Mahathir said he was very satisfied with progress on the island.

"Before, there were between 20,000 and 30,000 visitors to Langkawi, but today more than one million tourists stream to the island.

"Langkawi residents benefit from this development and they are eager to dispose of their property at attractive prices," the Prime Minister said, in a lighter vein.

On the Port Langkasuka

project which involves the development of marinas, commercial complexes, residential homes and the expansion of the Langkawi International Airport runway, Dr Mahathir said the idea for the project was mooted when he visited France where a tourism project was developed using the reclamation method.

He said the idea was suitable for Langkawi which did not have much land.

Dr Mahathir praised Ting for the courage to take up such a major project.

"This idea had been brought up many times and most people merely lauded it but Ting showed the courage to undertake the project," he added. Ting later briefed Dr Mahathir on the components of the project at the construction site.