

PM: Don't lower self-esteem with charity mentality

**By Manan Osman
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SHAH ALAM, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad called on Malaysians not to lower their self-esteem by forever asking for charity when they should instead work towards being independent and self-reliant.

Dr Mahathir said the people should develop a culture where they would always strive for work instead of waiting for assistance from others.

"In a country where jobs are plentiful, and unless they are not able to, there is no reason why individuals should not work for a living.

"They should have pride and should not lower their

self-esteem by only waiting for assistance from other people," the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at a fund-raising dinner organised by the Selangor Poverty Eradication Foundation (YBK) at the Dewan Jubilee Perak here tonight.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib, his wife Puan Sri Rohani Asbi Asnan, YBK chairman Zainal Abidin Sakom, were among those present at the dinner.

Dr Mahathir commended the YBK for its approach in poverty eradication. Its approach of providing skilled training was a more effective way of eradicating poverty.

Such an approach was better than just giving di-

rect aid, he said.

This approach would enable students from poor families and youths with poor academic qualifications to be trained to acquire the necessary skills to earn a decent livelihood, he said.

In this way, the Government's programme to eradicate poverty and restructure society would be more meaningful and enduring, he said.

Nevertheless, the Prime Minister said organisations such as the YBK should continue to be supported as they are committed to helping the poor.

He praised the foundation for its effort and said that other States should follow suit.

Dr Mahathir then re-

ceived donations totalling RM4.5 million on behalf of the foundation. Major donors include Larut Consolidated with RM1.5 million and Sime UEP Development with RM1 million.

Earlier, Muhammad said the State Government has approved loans totalling RM26.9 million under a special scheme to enable the hardcore poor to invest in Bumiputera unit trusts.

He said the scheme introduced in 1987 has benefited 26,951 families.

"Under the programme for the development of the hardcore poor jointly administered with the Federal Government, RM16.84 million in loans for ASB investment schemes benefiting 3,369 families have been approved," he said.