

Dr M: KUB should be run as a company, not a co-op

LANGKAWI, Sun. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Koperasi Usaha Bersatu Malaysia Bhd (KUB) should be run like a company instead of a co-operative.

He said KUB had grown into a major business entity and that the co-operative system of running the organisation could result in losses to its members.

"KUB has grown into a big business concern. It is no longer suitable to be run like a co-operative," he said after officiating the groundbreaking ceremony of KUB's tourism and hotel school in Telok Baru here.

He said KUB members stood to lose if the organisation continued to be run like a co-operative.

Dr Mahathir said co-operatives were abused by their leaders for their personal gains.

"This forced the Government to intervene to curb further abuses. One step taken by the Government was to abolish the tax privileges of co-operatives.

"Today, many co-operatives are run more professionally like KUB and it is involved in numerous activities including education, properties, manufacturing and tourism," he said.

The Prime Minister said in the light of KUB's success, the organisation should be run like a company for the benefit of its members.

Dr Mahathir also encouraged the people to take up jobs in the hospitality industry.

KUB chairman Hassan Harun said the co-operative was confident it could train up to 5,000 students in the hotel industry by end of next year.

"The school here and another which we recently acquired from the National Productivity Centre in Petaling Jaya will jointly be able to train up to 1,000 students annually," he said.

KUB's tourism and hotel school which is now temporarily housed at De Lima Resort was set up in 1991.

The school is expected to move to its new RM30 million building next year.

Later, speaking to newsmen, Dr Mahathir said the Government would study the possibility of allowing contributors to the Employees' Provident Fund to withdraw their money to buy a second house.

The Prime Minister, however, said this would be studied on a case by case basis.

On a report that Sabah Chief Minister Tan Sri Sakaran Dandai was willing to pave the way for young blood to lead the State, Dr Mahathir said no one was indispensable.

"All of us, including myself, are ready to make way for a new generation because in a democratic Malaysia, no one is indispensable.

"But don't push us out," he said in a lighter vein.