

# PM: Projects benefit people

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**GUAR CHEMPEDAK** (Kedah), Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad called on the people to fully support projects initiated by the Government to uplift their livelihood.

Speaking at the launching of "towards fulfilling a vision" campaign organised by Muda Agricultural Development Authority (Mada) at its service centre here, Dr Mahathir said these projects were drawn up by the Government to improve their income.

Referring to the controversial integrated tiger prawn farming project in Kerpan in Kedah and the Petronas oil refinery project in Malacca, Dr Mahathir said the two projects offered tremendous benefit to the landowners and farmers.

He said the earnings from these projects were much better than what they would reap from traditional ventures like padi farming.

Dr Mahathir was sad that in both projects the minority group had dictated terms, causing the implementation to be delayed.

"In a democratic country, the minority should accept the decision of the majority.

"In these two projects, only 10 per cent of those involved disagreed. It is only right if these 10 per cent group of people accepted the decision of the remaining 90 per cent participants to allow the project to take off," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the implementation of two projects was delayed because the disgruntled group, influenced and instigated by certain quarters who received financial assistance from "outsiders", had demanded unreasonable terms.

In order to keep abreast of the development of the country, the Prime Minister said the people should not close their minds to the benefit of such projects.

"We should look at the projects with an open mind and if there are obvious benefits, we must give them full backing."

Also present at the launch were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff and Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid.

Dr Mahathir cited the success of the Mada scheme as an example as to why support from the people was needed for such projects.

He said many farmers protested when the Government introduced padi double-cropping 24 years ago.

"But today we are enjoying the benefit from the project. When we started the Muda scheme, the Government spent about RM400 million to build irrigation canals.

"The farmers are not complaining today because their income has increased because of the project."

Another example cited by Dr Mahathir to prove the Government's sincerity in

□ PLEASE TURN TO  
PAGE 2, COL 1

# Prizes for promising farmers

□ FROM PAGE ONE

uplifting the standard of living of the people was the development of Langkawi island into a tourist destination.

"There are people in Johor who asked why I regularly visited the island.

"Actually, I enjoy watch-

ing tourists flocking to the island. Ten years ago, only 30,000 people visited the island a year but until October this year 1.25 million people had visited the island.

"This benefits the Langkawi people because the growing tourist arrivals have provided them with

business opportunities.

"A 'goreng pisang' seller in Langkawi is now earning RM1,500 a month."

Dr Mahathir also called on the people not to be influenced by the Opposition trying to lure votes.

"They are only interested in gaining political mileage and has gone as far as using

religion to fulfil their vested interest."

Later, the Prime Minister presented prizes to promising farmers under the Muda area.

He also visited the exhibition booths put up by Mada in conjunction with the campaign.

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