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Mahathir-green

TOWNSHIP PROJECTS SHOULD INCLUDE GREENING THE ENVIRONMENT

PETALING JAYA, April 5 (Bernama) -- All new township projects should including to green the environment as well as sufficient water catchment area to prevent flash floods, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said that if enough trees were planted in a developed area, the rain water would be absorbed by the soil, thus preventing flash floods.

"It is very important that in planning a township, vast area should be allocated for the planting of trees and grass," he said when launching the "Gift of Trees Project" here.

He said the government also felt that each township project should have a big reservoir to store rain water.

To mark the launching the nation-wide tree planting project, Dr Mahathir planted a Petaling tree (*Ochanostachys Amentacea* Masters) at Taman Rekreasi Kelana Jaya here.

Information on the project is available on the Internet so that interested parties outside Malaysia can take part and get further details on greening efforts carried out in the country.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was undergoing rapid development and this involved construction of many buildings including new township projects all over the country.

This usually involved the cutting down of trees for the construction of roads, some of which used cement in place of bitumen purportedly to make them more attractive, he said.

Unfortunately, he said when it rained, all the water would flow into the drains which were not designed in the first place to take large volume of water.

This had caused frequent flash floods in the urban areas, creating havoc to traffic flow and recently disrupting flight schedule as aircraft could not land at the airport, he said.

"I hope this matter is given due attention especially by our planners and architects who are efficient in planning development but until now might not be that efficient in resolving the problem of floods. The lack of trees also contributes to high temperature in the area being developed," he said.

On the "Gift of trees Project", Dr Mahathir said trees should be planted in varieties to make them looked natural and they could be beautify with landscaping.

For the road side, he said one variety of trees could be chosen and in the urban areas, major roads could be named after the trees such as "Petaling Avenue" or "Jati Avenue".

Dr Mahathir said the planting of trees should be carried out in a professional manner.

"The trees should also be taken care of so that they will be pleasant to see rather than becoming an eyesore. Some trees despite being green can become an eyesore," he added. --Bernama

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