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Mahathir-Development

CHANGE LIFESTYLE TO BENEFIT FROM RAPID DEVELOPMENT, SAYS PM

PULAU PINANG, April 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the people should change their lifestyle to better enjoy the facilities provided by the country's rapid development.

He said the rapid development in the country was pointless if the people still stuck to their old way of life and did not know how to adapt to the facilities provided.

He said that with the development came highrise and multi-storey buildings and the residents of such buildings should have a high sense of discipline and appreciate the facilities provided, like the lifts.

Dwelling in flats or condominiums was very different from living in houses with compounds and the residents could not rear animals or put out their clothes to dry as they liked, to the extent of spoiling the view, he said when launching the Bayan Lepas expressway, here.

"Many residents are too rough and press the buttons several times until the buttons are damaged or they press the buttons for both directions at the same time, confusing the lifts," he said to laughter from those present.

He also asked the building developers to provide facilities like drying yards, more systematic installation of air-conditioners and a central antenna for television reception to overcome the problem of "unsightly" buildings.

Dr Mahathir said it was not wrong for the people to spend more to make their lives more comfortable and meaningful.

He also reminded them of their responsibility to look after the cleanliness and beauty of the environment so that their abode would be more tidy and their living standard would rise.

One need not earn a lot to raise one's living standard, he said, adding that what mattered was how one spent one's money to obtain comforts and happiness.

He also told the people and the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that instead of blaming others and the government for today's living conditions, they should be asking themselves what they could do to make life more comfortable.

"As leaders we have to talk about this situation because we do not want to become a developed country where the living conditions, practices and attitudes do not go hand in hand with the development," he said.

Dr Mahathir also criticised some people who were prepared to eat at dirty stalls filled with flies and food operators who did not provide clean food.

In the rapid development of a state, even the nasi kandar seller had to change his image from one of rolling up the sarong and serving rice with the hands to preparing more hygienic food, having a restaurant with food covers and waiters in clean clothes and with their heads covered, he said.

"We must show the world that we not only have property but are also a force to reckon with and we want people to respect us," he said.

He added that he was impressed with Pulau Pinang's development and called for the people's cooperation in developing the state into one of the most progressive in Malaysia as well as a model state.

After opening the 9.2km expressway, Dr Mahathir and Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and his deputy, Datuk Mohamed Shariff Omar witnessed the signing of a privatisation project for the construction of the Jelutong

expressway between the state government and Jelutong Development Sdn Bhd (JDSB), a subsidiary of IJM Corporation Berhad.

The state government was represented by State Secretary Datuk Jamaluddin Ahmad Damanhuri and his deputy, Siti Balkish Shariff while JDSB was represented by IJM managing director Krishnan Tan Boon Seng and JSDB director Datuk Anuar Osman.

The 4.7km expressway, which is expected to be ready in three years, costs RM300 million, including compensation for the squatters and land acquisition.

At the ceremony, Krishnan presented a RM1.3 million cheque to the state government as part of a RM\$24.1 million payment for the government land involved.

Dr Mahathir later visited the construction site of the RM1.2 billion Bayan Bay Marina & Resort which is being developed by Eternal Resources Sdn Bhd, a joint venture between the Penang Development Corporation (PDC) and Anson Perdana Bhd.

Its chairman, Tengku Datuk Idaura Tengku Ibrahim said the construction work started last year and the project was scheduled for completion by 2000.

He said the project on 32 hectares of reclaimed land off Bayan Baru would have three hotels, luxury apartments, a shopping centre, a theme park, a marina and office space.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Mohamed Shariff Omar on the 45-minute tour. -- BERNAMA

ZU AA JK