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Mahathir-hospital

GIVE M'SIANS DISCOUNTS, MAHATHIR URGES PRIVATE HOSPITALS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged local private hospitals to charge Malaysians less for their medical bill.

"Please give discounts to Malaysian patients whose incomes have already diminished by 45 per cent," he said at the opening of the Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre in Jalan Ampang here.

The prime minister said private hospitals could impose higher charges on foreigners as the ringgit's depreciation had raised their affordability.

"At the Cabinet meeting today, the health minister, Datuk Chua Jui Meng said pressure was mounting on government hospitals to accept more patients as they could not afford the charges of private hospitals," the prime minister said.

Dr Mahathir also called on medical practitioners to take a salary cut to bring down the operating costs of hospitals.

He also hoped that private hospitals would help the less fortunate to get treatment at their hospitals in line with the caring society concept.

Also present was Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre Kuala Lumpur was built at a cost of RM165 million at Jalan Ampang here and started operations in August last year.

It comprises a 330-bed tertiary-care hospital and a separate medical office building accommodating specialist outpatient clinics of various specialties and sub-specialties.

The hospital, among other things, has nine operating theatres, a procedure room for minor surgery, intensive care, coronary care and neonatal intensive care units, a day-care centre, bone desimetometry and pathological services.

It is a joint venture between Tan & Tan Developments Berhad, holding 30 per cent of the equity, Gleneagles (M) Sdn Bhd (30 per cent), Insas Bhd (20 per cent) and PNB Equity Resource Corporation Sdn Bhd (20 per cent). --

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