

23/04/1997

Mahathir urges Malaysians to change lifestyle

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday the people should change their lifestyle to better enjoy the facilities provided by the country's rapid development.

He said rapid development is pointless if the people still stick to their old way of life and do not know how to adapt to the facilities provided.

He said with development come high-rise 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 is different from living in houses with compounds and the residents could not rear animals or hang their clothes to dry as they like, to the extent of spoiling the view, he said when launching the Bayan Lepas expressway in Penang.

"Many residents are too rough and press the buttons several times until they 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 is 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 have to earn a lot to raise one's living standard, he said, adding that what matters is how one spend one's money to obtain comforts and happiness.

He also told the people and the non-governmental organisations 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 are prepared to eat at dirty stalls filled with flies and food operators who do 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 hygienic food, having a restaurant with food covers and waiters in clean clothes and with their heads covered, he said.

He added that he is impressed with Penang's development and urged the people to cooperate to develop the state into one of the most progressive in Malaysia.

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 Corp and Anson Perdana Bhd.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon on the 45-minute tour.

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