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PM: Stop politicising youth problems and help tackle them

SEREMBAN, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today there were people in a certain State who politicised the social ills affecting youths and arrogantly claimed that they could solve them.

He said instead of politicising the matter, all quarters should join hands to study it in depth so that suitable solutions could be found.

"There are those in a State who claim that they can solve the problems by themselves," he said at a luncheon attended by State Barisan Nasional leaders and State Government department heads at the Allson Klana Resort.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad and wife Puan Sri Hazizah Tumin.

The Prime Minister did not name the State but was making obvious reference to Kelantan where the Pas State Government claimed that its decision to ban gambling, alcohol consumption and entertainment centres had helped reduce social problems.

"But they seem to be unaware that in their State, there are more cases of dadah abuse, AIDS and other social ills.

"We should not be arrogant and claim that we are the only intelligent ones while others are stupid.

"We should actually join efforts to solve this problem. We in Umno and BN do not claim that we know how to deal with this problem," he said, adding that he wanted to see whether those who claimed to have the solutions to the problems, could solve them.

He said it was a fact that Muslim Malays formed the majority of those who were involved in unhealthy activities.

Later, at the official opening of the Mawar Haemodialysis Centre in Jalan Rasah, Dr Mahathir said that due to the escalating price of land, it must be fully utilised.

He said land should be used for as many purposes as possible.

Dr Mahathir said landowners should use their land for more than one purpose which in turn could help them achieve higher profits.

He said charitable centres which were built on expensive land should also use it for other purposes which could bring additional income.

"Centres hoping to survive on donations alone will not be able to sustain and will need to seek other means."

Meanwhile, State executive councillor Datuk Dr Yeow Chai Thiam, who is also the chairman of the centre, said the idea to build the centre, believed to be the biggest in Asia, was mooted by Mohamed Isa in an effort to help poor kidney patients.

The four-storey building covers 0.6 hectare.

Dr Yeow said patients seeking treatment at a private clinic would have to pay between RM120 and RM150 for each visit, adding that this was too expensive for those in the lower income group.

"At this centre, we understand the plight of these patients and therefore would only charge RM70 per visit," he said.

Dr Yeow said as a start, 15 haemodialysis machines costing about RM1 million had been installed at the centre and would be manned by a doctor and four nurses.

"In time, we hope to bring the centre to its maximum capacity of 100 machines.

"We also have plans to open a centre in each of the seven districts in

the State. They will have four machines each," he added.

Dr Mahathir later attended a dinner organised by the centre at the Seremban Municipal Council Hall.

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