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Mahathir-Planning

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT LONG-TERM NEEDS

JOHOR BAHRU, April 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today planning of a development project must take into account the long-term requirements and not merely to suit pressing current needs or for short-term.

The prime minister said long-term planning was very important to ensure projects implemented need not be modified or added on a few years later as was being done to many projects now.

" We don't need to add on additional infrastructures in a short period of time if we have taken into account the present and future needs.

" We must be confident of rapid growth although the country is facing economic slowdown. We have to work harder a bit," he said when opening the new terminal building of the Sultan Ismail International Airport in Senai, near here.

Opening of the terminal is the last itinerary for Dr Mahathir in his two-day working visit to Johor.

He cited the Senai and Langkawi airports which could not cope with the passenger traffic as they were planned merely to suit current requirements.

Due to poor planning, the government had to fork out more money to expand the two airports.

He said the Sultan Ismail International Airport now had the capacity to handle the passenger and traffic volume for the next 20 years.

Dr Mahathir said planning of airports must take into account the long-term requirements as far as 20 years ahead.

" Many development projects now do not take into account the long-term planning and hence, they have to be modified two years after completion," he said.

Dr Mahathir also urged the people to be prepared to pay a little bit more if they wanted to enjoy more comfort and sophisticated facilities.

" The era to enjoy facilities for free is over. Taxes collected are not enough to provide such facilities," he said.

The airport, renovated and expanded for RM85 million, can now receive DC-10 aircraft.

-- BERNAMA

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