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PM: Instil sense of responsibility

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KANGAR, Tues.- Teachers and lecturers must instill in their students a sense of responsibility towards the country and the future generation.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said as educators, they were also responsible for moulding students who would be resilient and capable of defending the nation.

"They have to instil love for the country, race and the future generation in students," he said when opening the RM55 million Maktab Perguruan Perlis in Behor Pulaui, today.

Dr Mahathir said he was sad that some educators had misused their position in schools and higher learning institutions to poison the minds of their students. "They try to influence their students, draw their attention to politics and continue to incite hatred of people who had supported their studies."

He said although some were paying students, they were only paying a small fraction of the actual fees and their studies were still supported by the Government. "Despite this, they choose not to utilise the facilities fully because they had been incited by politicians and by their teachers and lecturers.

"Due to their involvement in activities which do not benefit them, their academic performance is poor and this is sad because people before them had to strive very hard in their quest for knowledge due to lack of educational opportunities. "It also defeats the purpose of our former leaders in formulating an education system aimed to benefit the people."

Also present were Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Information Minister Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaacob.

Dr Mahathir also said without knowledge, it would be difficult for the people to fight for the well-being of the race and religion.

"Today we see Muslims being oppressed by their enemies in countries like Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina and we are sad because Muslims do not have the knowledge with which to defend themselves. It is useless to talk about Islamic civilisation because the situation is now different," he said.

Later, at the ground-breaking ceremony of a State public housing project at Jalan Sekolah Menengah Derma, Dr Mahathir said the Government would continue to provide housing for the lower income group. He also said the Government had to raise the ceiling prices of low-cost houses from RM25,000 a unit in certain places because of varied land prices but assured that the prices were still reasonable.

Dr Mahathir hoped that measures were taken to ensure only those eligible were allotted low-cost houses as some people living in squatter houses were found to own expensive refrigerators and drive Proton and Mercedes cars.

He expressed regret over the reluctance of some housing developers to build low-cost houses despite Government's insistence. "They should adhere to the Government guidelines that they use some of the huge profits earned by building the medium and high cost houses to finance the building of the low cost houses."

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