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`Need to improve Federal and State ties'

GURUN, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there is a need for greater co-operation between the Federal and State Governments to expedite development of the country.

Towards this end, he said, there was a need to adopt a new administrative system and philosophy.

Dr Mahathir said the present Federal-State relations could be improved through smart-partnerships.

"There is also a need for political leadership in the respective State Governments and civil service to work together.

"We want to see smart-partnerships between the State and Federal Governments.

"I can't understand why people from the same party cannot work together."

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the opening of a seminar on smart-partnership for Kedah's development here.

The Prime Minister said he also stressed this to Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers yesterday.

The three-day seminar attended by civil servants, private sector and corporate figures is aimed at gathering input for the proposed Kedah Development Action Plan II (2001-2010).

Citing Kedah as an example, Dr Mahathir said the State was lagging far behind others in terms of development. The reason for this was that the Kedah State Government often dragged its feet in approving projects.

"The projects are approved but this often comes a long time after the applications are submitted.

"The State Government should not have too much bureaucratic red-tape."

Dr Mahathir said one way Kedah could be developed fast was for the State Government to identify a niche. In jest, the Prime Minister said the State could come up with all kinds of excuses why it was not developed.

"Maybe it's because the Government did not make Kedah the capital of this country ... there is no Putrajaya here."

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