

Opposition members criticised for ingratitude

Nst 2 5 NOV 2001

PUTRAJAYA, Sat. --- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad took to task certain opposition members who enjoyed many benefits when with the Government, but were quick to forget them once they turned their back on the Government.

The Prime Minister said these people made all kinds of demands when they were still with the Government and hid their intention of joining the opposition.

"While they were with the Government, they had many aspirations and requests, which were met, but they never showed any appreciation.

"After we help them (opposition members), they will bite our hands. This is their nature.

"Followers of opposition parties are always taught not to be grateful for whatever things they receive.

"We are being criticised, even when we give them scholarships. This is a very bad culture," he said after launching the WorldSpace Digital Audio Broadcasting Service, provided by Asiaspace Dotcom Sdn Bhd at his office here.

A Bahasa Malaysia daily today quoted former Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib as saying he was prepared to disclose the list of people, including those who had joined the opposition, who were given land in the State.

On Wednesday, Pas secretary-general Nasharuddin Mat Isa had challenged Information Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Senator Datuk Zainuddin Maidin to name the opposition leaders who had obtained privileges from the Selangor Government.

On the 1.3 per cent contraction of the country's Gross Domestic Product for the third quarter of this year, Dr Mahathir said the Government's main priority would be to prevent recession at all costs.

"According to normal calculations, there will be inflation if there are contractions in two quarters.

"We hope there will be positive growth, albeit little, in the fourth quarter. This will mean that our economy is still in the positive growth territory at the end of the one fiscal year," he said.

Bank Negara Governor Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz, who announced the country's economic and financial statistics of the third quarter yesterday had expressed hope that the fourth quarter GDP would be better than that of the third quarter.