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Mahathir-Town

DEVELOPMENT OF LARGE TOWNS SUCCESSFUL, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

BUKIT KAYU HITAM, March 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today large-scale urban development projects by both the government and the private sector have been successful and are not an extravagance as claimed by some parties.

The prime minister said this success was achieved because the projects were implemented after careful and systematic planning.

"We do not indulge in mega projects just to pound our chest and show off, they are important to national development," he said when launching the Kota Perdana-Asean Industrial Metropolis 2010 here.

Large-scale development of new towns brought profits to contractors, materials suppliers and workers while residents got to enjoy well-equipped infrastructures, he said.

Among the urban development projects implemented by the government were Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Shah Alam and the latest projects, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya, while those implemented by the private sector included Bandar Sunway, Puchong and Serdang, he said.

The prime minister said local engineers not only gained employment but also got to learn about the industry (large-scale urban development) and were finally able to master the industry.

"In Malaysia, building big towns is not something unusual. We don't just plan to build a house or a row of shophouses," he said.

The same applied to the development of the North-South Expressway which had spawned other forms of development in the surrounding areas, he said.

"When we build an infrastructure, other development like water and electricity supply, telephone service, schools and hospitals will follow," he said.

He said that in the past, Malaysia had been criticised for implementing mega projects ostensibly to show off its capability to the world but the projects had actually been successful.

Citing the national car as an example, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was now nearly 100 per cent in control in the construction of the car from the design to the manufacture of its components.

Malaysia was able to switch from an ago-based economy to a manufacturing economy. Now it was in control of the manufacturing sector and was the third biggest microchip maker in the world, he said.

"Unfortunately there are some Malaysians who do not understand and regard the big projects as extravagant," he said.

He said the government used the nation's money frugally and that was why Malaysia need not borrow from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to revive its economy.

"If the country has no money, surely we cannot revive the economy," he said.

He said the Malaysian economy could grow even faster if the people supported the government in its efforts to develop the country for their wellbeing.

Dr Mahathir also urged the people not to be jealous of the rich and successful entrepreneurs because they could help those who faced hardship and the country could collect tax from them.

"They are like the goose that lays the golden egg. We feed it properly so that it can lay golden eggs everyday. But if we slaughter it and eat its flesh, we will not get golden eggs anymore," he said.

-- BERNAMA
JM MAN JK