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Extension of Malaysia Plan period being looked into

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the Government is looking into the possibility of extending the Malaysia Plan period from the current five years to 10 years.

The Prime Minister said this was because the implementation of some development projects under one Plan tended to "cross over to another Plan".

Speaking to reporters after declaring Putrajaya a Federal Territory at Dataran Perdana here, Dr Mahathir said this was the same for the national Budget.

"However, the study on the extension will only involve the Malaysia Plan."

Dr Mahathir also said he would monitor the performance of all ministries to ensure their annual allocations were spent in the same year.

"Sometimes, there are ministries which ask for allocations but their projects are not implemented immediately.

"They have to acquire land (first), and surely this exercise will take some six months while construction requires another three years.

"Therefore, they are not able to spend the money in the same year," he said.

As such, he advised ministries to plan their projects accordingly to ensure efficient implementation.

Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin had last year warned ministries to spend their allocations efficiently after noting that large funds were not utilised despite having been given approvals.

Asked what was next after Putrajaya, Dr Mahathir said the Government did not think in terms of big projects.

"Today, our concentration is on agriculture. We have to improve food production and manufacturing to reduce import as well as to (increase) export.

"So, we are focusing on agriculture."

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