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Kedah unveils plan to achieve full development

JALOR STAR, Fri. - Kedah today unveiled an impressive 10-year action development plan - "Kedah Developed State - 2010", outlining strategies and policies that will make it attain developed State status by the year 2010.

The action plan, launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and witnessed by nearly 10,000 people from all walks of life at Wisma Darul Aman, here, focuses on development of the three largest contributors to the State's economy - industry, agriculture and tourism.

Strategic actions are also spelled out for implementation to help the hardcore poor and rural development.

The action plan was formulated after reviewing achievements of the "Kedah Development Action Plan (1991-2000)".

Addressing the crowd, Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that the objectives would be achieved if there was an all round support.

"One important factor, is political stability ... If we are peaceful, all can be achieved," he said, adding that negative politics would only result in failure.

Dr Mahathir said while it was important that elected representatives took the responsibility to see what had been planned were implemented, government officers must also display commitment in implementing the projects while the people give their leaders their support in return.

"They should make sure allocations either by the Federal and State Governments are utilised.

"We found in the past, bureaucracy had prevented implementation of projects ... We want to see a more systematic working procedure in Kedah's administration.

"Government officers must know their job specifications and responsibilities," he said.

The Prime Minister said the people must also be willing to make sacrifices and understand the need to give up things like their land to make way for development.

To ensure smooth implementation, seven working groups had been formed to oversee the development in the industrial, agricultural, information and communication technology, housing, human resources, tourism, education and infrastructure development sectors.

According to the plan, Kedah expects its growth rate to increase from the present nine per cent to 15 per cent by 2010.

Among major projects outlined in the masterplan include the development of Kuala Kedah Port, extension and renovation of the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport at Kepala Batas, construction of a new cargo airport in Bukit Kayu Hitam and the coastal highway between Kuala Kedah and Kuala Sanglang.

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