

Free-loading city folk

They want good services, but are reluctant to pay, says PM

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CYBERJAYA: City dwellers are sophisticated people but some are also free-loaders - they want good services and facilities but are reluctant to pay for them.

This seems to be Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's view of city dwellers whom he also described as very critical and demanding people.

"They not only demand, assuming that is their right, but at the same time they are not prepared to bear the cost for the facilities demanded," he said when opening a two-day seminar on urban management yesterday.

He said city dwellers should get rid of the "free-loading" attitude and realise that eventually someone will have to pay for the services and amenities provided - and that someone will have to be them.

He said: "They will have to accept the reality that the cost of living in urban areas is much higher than rural areas. Therefore, they will have to bear part of the cost."

The prime minister said they cannot

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always hope to dodge payment and expect others will pay for the things they enjoy

From roads which were hardly paved large highways were built and as the country progresses more services and other modern infrastructures were added.

Mahathir said all this cannot be provided for free and has to be paid for either directly or indirectly to support this modern urban lifestyle. He said facilities like expressways cannot be developed, maintained and managed through the collection of toll alone.

If these facilities were to be borne from toll collection, "the toll to be paid should be much more higher and if it is too high, it becomes a burden . . . many consumers will not use the facilities".

The seminar was organised by Institute Sultan Iskandar of Urban Habitat and Highrise, UTM and Setia Haruman Sdn Bhd (The master developer of Cyberjaya).