

Time to get off five-foot ways, says PM

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ALOR STAR: After 45 years of independence, the Malays are still deemed to be *kaki-lima* or five-foot way businessmen, and this is worries the prime minister.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged them yesterday to upgrade their business and entrepreneurial skills.

He said the Malays should plan and set up businesses in permanent premises so that they can expand and progress.

"The Malays cannot go on trading on five-foot ways until 2100, 2200 and 2300. We have to raise our standard," he

told reporters after shopping in Pekan Rabu here.

Mahathir said the price of goods sold at such premises may cost a little more but the businesses could be expanded as there is a market for the goods.

"The quality of the goods should, however, be maintained."

Mahathir had earlier visited the "Meat Shop", owned by a Malay businessman, which opened for business in Taman Anggerik late last month.

The shop is a one-stop centre for

consumers to buy all types of halal fresh meat and meat-based products at reasonable prices.

Mahathir said the "Meat Shop" was among the best examples for Malay traders, as the place is clean and attractive, and the packaging done well.

He said the government would help Malay traders upgrade their businesses and ensure that they are on par with those in other countries, provided they were hardworking and had the potential to be successful.