

# Don't stray from objectives, NGOs told

(SUN) 10 JUN 2003

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminded non-governmental organisations (NGOs) yesterday not to deviate from their original objectives and to use allocations and funds properly.

The NGOs should use the funds effectively and in accordance with regulations, he said when opening the third session of the Budget 2004 Dialogue at the Finance Ministry here.

Mahathir, who is also the finance minister, hoped the NGOs would continue to help the needy and complement government programmes in aid of the less fortunate.

He also invited the NGOs to join forces with the government in arresting negative social influences.

Mahathir said that despite the programmes and the social and community projects that had been implemented, cases of incest, rape and robbery, and the distribution of pornographic and pirated VCDs continued.

"It is here that I find that the role and contributions of NGOs are very important," he said, adding that he appreciated the role of the NGOs.

Mahathir said the government had spent much money to rehabilitate drug addicts and care for prisoners.

Urging the private sector to play a more active role in community obligations, he welcomed the move by private companies to set up sports and welfare associations as well as family clubs in their organisations.

This year, nearly half or more than RM16 billion of development expenditure was channelled towards social projects encompassing the building of schools, hospitals, clinics, rural roads and housing.

This shows that social development programmes continue to be the main agenda in every development plan drawn up by the government.

Mahathir said the new economic stimulus package announced on May 21 should be implemented with determination by all groups so that its objectives could be achieved.

"The government is confident that these measures can once more generate economic growth to exceed the projected 4.5%," he said.