

Dr M: Don't make First World demands

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad advised Malaysians yesterday to avoid behaving as if they are First World citizens as Malaysia is still a developing nation.

He cited, as an example, the people's protest against the proposed construction of a RM1.5 billion incinerator as it allegedly produced toxic gases.

He said Malaysians were 10 times poorer than those in the developed countries and added that "we've

become so arrogant that the level of pollution acceptable to people 10 times richer is not acceptable for us".

Mahathir, who is also the Umno president, told the 54th Umno General Assembly at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) Malaysians were demanding standards higher than those of the developed countries.

"We will suffer if we continue to behave in this manner," he said.

He said the government had proposed to build an incinerator - one more modern than some of those found in Japan and other developed countries - and place it away from residential areas to ensure that the

people were not affected.

In Japan, he said, even ordinary incinerators were so clean that they could be built in the middle of residential areas and no one would protest. The people were, however, required to pay a high rate for the incinerators.

Mahathir said some Malaysians demanding first-class facilities were prepared to pay only third-class rates, which should not be the case.

Where the economy is concerned, he said the country's strategy was to live within its means by managing development according to its financial capacity and needs.