

Dr M: Malaysians an arrogant lot

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MALAYSIANS have become an arrogant lot whereby acceptable pollution standards of developed countries are considered not good enough for them, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Citing the proposed incinerator project in Broga, the Umno president said the facility, to be placed far from residential areas, was to be the most modern and cleaner than many found in Japan and other developed countries.

The people's safety would be ensured as there would be no fly-ash to pollute the air, he said in his presidential address.

"But the people in this country, which is 10 times poorer than developed countries, protest against the incinerator because it will allegedly produce toxic gases.

"We have become so arrogant that the acceptable level of pollution of people who are 10 times richer is not good enough for us," he said.

"We are not rich yet. We cannot even enjoy the same standards as developed countries. But we now demand standards higher than developed countries," he added.

Dr Mahathir said that in Japan, ordinary incinerators were so clean that they could be built in

the middle of residential areas.

He said the residents used the incineration plant as a place for recreation, swimming clubs and other activities.

"No one protested. The people pay a high rate for their incinerators," he added.

He said the over one million inhabitants here produced rubbish that could bury the city underneath a mountain of garbage in two years.

Dumping in open land would pollute the air, cause diseases, and poison underground water. Thus, he said, the Government was prepared to spend over RM1.5bil to build the most modern and safest incinerator.