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Mahathir-NGO

DO NOT STRAY FROM ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES, PM TO NGO

PUTRAJAYA, June 9 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, today urged Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) to act positively and not deviate from their original objectives.

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

The Prime Minister hoped 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 issues.

Dr Mahathir said despite the various programmes as well as the social and community projects that had been implemented still cases of incest, rape, robbery, distribution of pornographic and pirated VCD continued.

Vandalism, domestic violence and various other problems had not abated, he said.

"It is here that I find that the role and contributions of the NGOs as very important," the Prime Minister said.

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

Dr Mahathir said he very much appreciated the role of the NGOs which were willing to help society on a voluntary basis.

Such a spirit should be instilled in the society at large.

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

This reflected management's concern for the welfare of employees.

"Still we expect private organisations to contribute from the aspect of money, sponsorships and volunteers for social and community work," he said.

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

This proved that social development programmes continued to be the main agenda in every development programme drawn up by the government.

Socio-economic statistics showed that people enjoyed a better quality of life from the aspect of per capita income (RM14,000), parity purchasing power (US\$8,800), electricity supply (98 per cent) rural water supply (93 per cent).

Dr 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 regenerate economic growth to exceed the projected 4.5 per cent," he said.

The Prime Minister said the government would ensure that Malaysians lived in harmony and did not become factional.

"Experience has taught us amply that disunity within a race will weaken the race and the country will be easily conquered by the enemies either physically, economically or through brainwashing," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MAM MFJ AAM

