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`Let experts decide on language issue'

ALOR STAR, Wed. - Malaysians should remain calm on the issue of Bahasa Melayu purity as a misunderstanding could create a rift, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"Allow the language experts to decide on the issue of mixing foreign languages, especially English, with Bahasa Melayu, instead of getting emotional," he said after performing the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Kedah Malay Assembly Hall at Lebuhraya Darulaman here today.

The assembly raised RM500,000 in donations which will go towards the construction of the RM8 million building.

Dr Mahathir said the experts should conduct an in-depth study to decide whether the current usage is "pure or otherwise".

At the same time, he reminded Malaysians to refrain from passing remarks or comments which could aggravate the situation.

"The outcome of the study will decide whether the language used today is actual `Bahasa Melayu rojak' or if it is heading towards that," he said.

"I find that those who are talking about this do not really understand the reason or the state of the language itself."

"If we look closely, Bahasa Melayu has been borrowing terms from the Arabs after Islam came in," he said.

(END)