

Trees get Dr M's attention as he recovers at IJN

Malaysiakini.com

May 25, 2011

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad is back in the cyberworld after being "silent" for about 11 days, with a blog posting focusing on trees.

The article titled "Planting Trees" was posted on his blogsite chedet.co.cc on Monday at about 2pm.

He is currently receiving treatment at the the National Heart Institute (IJN) after being admitted last Wednesday for chest infection.

Mahathir, as observant as ever, wrote that the success of Malaysia's plantation industry had "totally affected our thinking".

He said: "We know that by planting trees in perfect rows, with the trees separated from each other by a specific distance, we maximise the potential for growth and render the extraction of the latex or the fruits easier and more efficiently. We miss none of the trees when we tap rubber or bring down the fruits."

But Mahathir noted that forest trees did not grow in rows.

"They are scattered haphazardly. It's this which gives the forest their special appearance or character," he said.

Mahathir felt that "for various reasons we have to reforest the forest we had raped". He said there was a need to create new forests.

"But because we are so addicted to planting trees in orderly rows, when we want to reforest or to create a new forest, we plant the forest trees in the same way.

"Even when we plant teak and other trees on the road shoulders, they are planted in perfect rows. Our secondary man-made forests look nothing like forests at all. They look like tree estates," he observed.

"But there are times when planting on the road sides, we want to create an avenue of trees. Then we should plant just one row of trees or palm trees perfectly aligned and separated," he said, adding that the trees should be the same all the way through.

"But when we want to recreate forests, let the trees be scattered haphazardly like in the forest," was his suggestion.

- Bernama