

Dr M gives thumbs up for one-off budget bonus
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Malaysia's fourth prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad today gave his seal of approval for Budget 2012, particularly the decision to award one-off cash bonuses.

Saying this at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, Mahathir said that the government is "killing two birds with one stone".

"Elections are considered, while also improving the quality of life," he said after launching a Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers conference on innovation.

"I think it is a good thing what the government has done."

However, he said, the government still needs to see through the implementation of these bonuses.

NONE Asked why he has taken an adverse stand on the Pakatan Rakyat budget which offers similar bonuses, Mahathir (centre in photo) said: "That one is airy fairy, nothing."

"Of course when you don't have the authority to spend money, you know how to spend other people's money.

"Wait until they become the government then they will know how difficult it is to make money and how wisely or how foolishly they can spend the money," he said.

Earlier, in his opening speech, he said that government needs to be innovative and reexamine some its policies which are too outdated and a hindrance to innovation.

"Many policies are dated 1926, we need to rethink them. The country has developed, we have more people (but) the government may have many laws, rules and policies that has not changed," he said.

azlan For example, he said, he knows of a doctor who recently relocated to Malaysia, but was denied the incentives promised by the government for returning professionals as he was already in the country.

"So he should have stayed overseas longer," he said.

He was also asked during the question-and-answer session who in Malaysia is the best example of an innovator.

"I am tempted to say myself. But that is very immodest," he joked.

He shared that he believes that first and second prime ministers Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra and Abdul Razak Hussein were great innovators as they managed to think up ways to get three distinct races to work together without losing their identities.