



Dr M: Mega projects are good for the economy
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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad defended mega projects, saying they have a big spin-off and help to stimulate the economy.

"When the government build mega projects, the spin-off is very big. All contractors get business as well as sub-contractors, suppliers, workers and even the nasi lemak sellers get business as they have something to sell to the workers," he told reporters today.

"They stimulate the economy and somewhere along the line, they will have to pay taxes, even the nasi lemak sellers because they have to source a lot of things from wholesalers who also pay taxes," he said.

Mahathir said the country's revenue has been going up every year because the economy is stimulated by the government as well as the private sector.

"So, when the government spends money, it gets back the money. Otherwise, how do you explain the government having more money every year," he said.

No comment on budget

Mahathir said the private sector and not the government should be responsible for building mega projects as businessmen always know how to make money from their investments.

"Business means you get some capital, do business and make a profit. If you want to expand, use the money or borrow from the bank," he said, adding that the government should go for privatisation exercises.

On the budget unveiled by government on Friday, Mahathir was reluctant to make any comment.

"Before you can make a comment, you have to study the budget very carefully because my experience is that the first-day comment is always very good and everybody is happy.

"But later when they begin to study the hidden agenda, then they feel very unhappy," he said.

"So, I'm still trying to find the hidden agenda," he added.

- *Bernama*

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