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## Kampung Baru one of my failures, admits Dr Mahathir

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says that one of his failures during his 22 years as Prime Minister was his administration's inability to rehabilitate and develop Kampung Baru.

In his blog Chedet yesterday he said that after the Government announced plans to develop Kampung Baru, problems arose concerning land ownership and land prices.

Many original residents had moved after becoming affluent as they found that Kampung Baru was no more suitable for them.

At the same time, many landowners had died and it was difficult to trace their heirs.

He said that landowners who could be found demanded high prices for their properties which meant that the cost of development would be high.

This would have made it impossible for Malays to own business or residential properties. "Perhaps the non-Malays can, but if the property is developed for sale to non-Malays, Kampung Baru will disappear as an area for Malays," he said.

To ensure that Malays stayed in Kampung Baru, one condition imposed on developers was that they were required to not only pay

for the land but also to provide residents with business premises and housing in the newly-developed Kampung Baru. "This once again would increase the development cost."

Malay developers could not undertake such a project and non-Malay developers were not interested as the purchasing power of Malays was low, he said.

Dr Mahathir said that even today, many Malays were not able to buy houses and shops allotted to them.

He hoped that the Government would be able to rebuild Kampung Baru so visitors would not see Malays in poverty in their own country.