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Dr M's claim of housing 1.5m foreigners 'baseless'

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JOHOR PROJECTS:
Ex-PM chooses to believe Bloomberg report without verifying it, says MB

RIZALMAN HAMMIM
JOHOR BARU
news@nst.com.my

JOHOR Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin said Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's latest claim that there are 60 development projects here that will house 1.5 million foreigners is baseless and ill-intentioned.

He said he was disappointed with Dr Mahathir's double standard in choosing to believe a Bloomberg report on this claim without requesting an objective explanation from the state government.

"As a patriot, Dr Mahathir should have asked for an explanation on this matter.

"Even if it is true that there are 60 development projects here, it is inconceivable that they could house 1.5 million foreigners when the population of Johor Baru is only around one million.

"According to Dr Mahathir's calculation, each of the 60 development projects would be home to 25,000 residents, a number which is beyond belief, considering that a development project would normally house between 2,000 and

2,500 residents only," said Khaled.

He said the former prime minister should accept the fact that some foreign media would always be sceptical of any development achieved by Johor and Malaysia.

"For them, a successful Malaysia is something that is out of the ordinary," said Khaled yesterday.

Dr Mahathir made the claim in an entry on his blog on Tuesday, quoting Bloomberg on the matter.

Earlier, at a Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) event in Pasir Gudang here, Dr Mahathir claimed that 700,000 foreigners would be given citizenship in Johor so that they could vote in the next general election.

"Dr Mahathir's claims are not only baseless and illogical, but have also strayed from facts from confirmed sources."

According to the Johor Land and Mines Office records, between 2003 and Nov 30, the number of approvals for foreign-owned property in Johor stood at 29,218 units.

"This represented only about 2.01 per cent of the total number of property ownership in Johor, which stood at 1,452,931 units.

"If you consider the National Property Information Centre's estimate of four residents per unit, this would bring the number of foreigners living in these properties to 116,872, which is well below the numbers claimed by Dr Mahathir," said Khaled.

He said Dr Mahathir should realise that providing opportunities for foreigners to own properties was different from

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Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin
Johor Menteri Besar

giving them citizenships.

"Even if he has proof that up to 700,000 Chinese nationals would be given Malaysian citizenship in the near future, he should refer this matter to PPBM president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin because as a member of parliament, Muhyiddin can propose an emergency motion to discuss the issue," said Khaled.

He said Dr Mahathir should give Johor the time and space to achieve its ambition of turning into a modern, prosperous and developed state just like when Johor gave him the time and space to make Malaysia a successful country.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad