

'URBAN POOR NEED SKILLS TRAINING'

Start businesses and acquire skills to expand them to escape urban poverty, urges PM

ADIB POVERA
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

RISING rural-urban migration, coupled with rural folk's limited skills, have contributed to the growing population of the urban poor.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said as urbanisation grew all over the world, rural folk migrate to urban areas to find jobs and earn better pay.

"This actually reflects rural

poverty. Because of rural poverty, rural folk migrate to cities.

"In some cases, they (rural folk) migrate to cities without any qualifications and (job) prospects.

"Many do not get trained, which results in them earning a low income (after migrating to cities). They then become the urban poor."

Dr Mahathir said this during his keynote address at the 2019 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty Forum: Inclusive Development and Sejahtera in the New Malaysia here yesterday.

To address this problem, Dr Mahathir said the government could provide training to help rural folk who migrate to urban areas develop new skills and secure jobs with better income.

He urged people to venture into entrepreneurship to elevate their socio-economic status.

"They have to learn how to do

business, even if it is small scale or in the small and medium-sized industry, to earn more money.

"We also noticed a trend where certain communities in Malaysia do not have enough (knowledge and skills) to grow their business.

"They are stagnant. Once they have achieved enough money to support their daily needs, they do not make any effort to expand their business.

"We have to educate them on the need to expand their businesses so that they will come out of urban poverty."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said a country could not consider itself developed if some segments of society had no access to basic amenities and jobs.

Similarly, he said, a developed country should not have people who struggle on a daily basis to eke out a living with their children

facing malnutrition.

"If we do not address the challenges of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Malaysia's aspiration to join the ranks of developed nations will be compromised."

He said the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 was formulated to address these concerns.

"It is for these reasons that we launched Malaysia's new economic model, the Shared Prosperity Vision, which we believe will enable all Malaysians to continuously experience sustainable and equitable growth at all levels of society, regardless of race, class or location.

"The aim of this model is to create an economy that is better structured and progressive, premised on high values, knowledge and active participation from all members of society."

Present was Yayasan Sejahtera

chairman Tan Sri Faizah Mohd Tahir.

At a press conference later, Dr Mahathir rejected claim that foreign direct investments (FDI) into Malaysia were low due to uncertainties over the succession plan of the top leadership.

Responding to a statement by Rembau member of parliament Khairy Jamaluddin, Dr Mahathir said the latest figures showed that FDI into the country had reached billions of ringgit.

He said he was optimistic that the country would continue to receive investments and inflow of foreign capital, subsequently accelerating growth.

On another matter, he said the government had yet to receive any notice from India over reports that New Delhi was considering limiting the trade of palm oil and other goods from Malaysia.