

Tender viable proposals to get projects: PM

> New govt policies on renewable energy will offer lots of oppotunities

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government will award renewable energy projects to industry players that submit viable proposals, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said the government had provided a lot of assistance in this sector as there was a lack of knowledge about the industry.

However, the government's support would not be "as big as before" as Malaysians now have all the knowledge, he added.

Mahathir said with the government's renewable energy policies, a lot of opportunities are available.

He rubbished claims that he had given contracts in this sector to people connected to him.

"You can ask my relatives if they got anything from me. Some of them don't even speak to me because it never happened, and I gave them nothing," he told reporters after the launch of the International Conference and Eco Products exhibition and conference yesterday.

Mahathir said there will be allegations of cronyism but the government has to award projects to someone, or the country will never progress.

On another matter, Mahathir said the government cannot lower taxes and increase subsidies at the same time as there must be a balance.

"We will try to lower taxes but the government must have money, if not it cannot give subsidies. If you lower taxes too much, the government will not have money to give subsidies."

He said the government will continue to give subsidies to targeted groups and deserving people.

However, Mahathir said that there are some in the B40 group that need subsidies and some who do not.

He said the government will no longer



Mahathir looks at a model Carbon Free pavilion for the 2020 Dubai Expo, as Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change Minister Yeo Bee Yin looks on. - **BERNAMAPIX**

give subsidies to everybody but only to deserving people.

"We will give details as to who should receive subsidies from the government. We will try to tax the rich more than the poor."

Meanwhile, when asked about Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd staff who had been laid off due to its closure, Mahathir said some of the staff will be rehired by the company

that takes over the Malay daily."

"Utusan will be closed but there will be a new company to take over, and some of the staff will be rehired by the new Utusan," he said.

It was reported that the last working day for Utusan employees was on Wednesday while their employment would end on Oct 31.