

# 'Complacency, reluctance to work hard setbacks for Malays'

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malays need to realise that their complacency and reluctance to work hard are the reasons why the country is occupied by foreign workers.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said history had shown that the Malays preferred to earn monthly wages and work on small farms or become fishermen, and few went into businesses or worked hard as labourers.

As a result of this attitude, Dr Mahathir said, there were not many Malays living in the cities to run businesses.

Dr Mahathir recalled his younger days in Alor Star during the British era, where the weekly

Pekan Rabu market saw the villagers selling produce and handicrafts.

"Their business did not become big. They did their business part-time. They did not have the desire to expand their business, just to eke out a living, that's it," he said.

He said when he was a teenager, towns were built and filled with Chinese shops. There were no Malay shops. There were some Indian food and spice shops.

"The Malay rulers did not recognise the Chinese and the Indians as citizens. They believed that these people would return to their home countries when their services were no longer needed,"

he said in a post titled "Not Working" on his blog Chedet.

He said the Chinese would usually migrate to other countries if they saw work opportunities, including to the United States, Australia and other British colonies.

"The stability of the British government and the availability of job opportunities drew people to the Malay states. They were willing to work hard. They were willing to take on dirty, difficult and dangerous work.

"The Malays were happy because the dirty, difficult and dangerous work was done by the foreigners. They were not concerned about the foreigners' wealth and prosperity. They be-

lieved that this country would remain theirs," he said, adding that as a result, they were not willing to work hard and run businesses seriously, which had kept them poor.

"The disparity between them and other races who were hard-working and running businesses widened. As a result, the rich became richer and the poor Malays became poorer.

"The Malays should realise what is happening to them. Unfortunately, they are oblivious and this continues till today. They are reluctant to work. They are willing to give up their jobs to foreigners. Because of this, the foreigners have flooded our country."

Dr Mahathir said there were seven million foreigners in the country seeking work.

"What will happen to the Malays? Clearly, what happened to the Malays and the country in the past will happen again. Some people claimed that the Malays are masters (*tuan*). But, masters of what? Of poverty, incapability, dependency on others, masters of these?"

He urged the Malays to change their mindset to determine their own fate.

"Being angry with others will not solve our problems. Our people are increasing, but a great number of poor people will not be able to compete with a small number of rich people."