

PM mulls possibility of 'cooperative village'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has related the story of a successful cooperative village shop in Japan and wonders whether such an idea would take off in Malaysia.

The Prime Minister said the shop worked well on the island of Okinawa, which stretches for 100km from north to south.

"In the old days, people in the south had difficulty getting supplies from the north," he wrote on his blog.

"The people in the villages decided to have a shop stocked with their needs. They collected money from their village and built a shop."

Dr Mahathir said the shop was funded by the villagers so that there

would be stock from the north.

"They employed a man from the village to manage the shop. The villagers bought their needs but did not pay immediately.

"Instead, they wrote on a piece of paper their name and the goods they had taken," he explained.

The paper would then be stuck on a board kept in the shop.

"At the end of the month, they would total up all their purchases and pay the amount due. The money was kept in a safe," he said.

"Later when business was not so good, they put up a table and a few chairs and started selling drinks and coffee."

He said every village would have

such a shop, adding: "It was a kind of cooperative, owned and operated by the villagers.

"Today, most of them have disappeared as access to their needs became easier due to better roads, motorcycles and cars. The one I visited is one of the few left.

"It worked well in Okinawa. I wonder if it would work well in Malaysia."

On Sept 21 last year, when addressing cooperative societies in Cyberjaya, Dr Mahathir said the cooperative movement could play a major role in helping low-income households in urban and rural areas cope with the rising cost of living. — Bernama



New chapter: Dr Mahathir presenting the letter of appointment to new Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Mohd Zuki Ali as Mohd Zuki's predecessor Tan Sri Dr Ismail Bakar looks on at the Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya. — Bernama