

# 'Climate change should not be taken lightly'

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia takes a serious view on climate change, and will adopt measures, starting with more generation of renewable energy, says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia would continue to expand its solar panel manufacturing business as the country was among the world's top exporters of good quality solar panels.

He said the country was committed to ensuring that 20% of energy generation would be from renewable sources.

However, Dr Mahathir said it did not include another 20% of power generation via hydro electric plants.

"Hydro electric is also renewable energy, so if you include that, it will be about 40%.

"We are making good progress in this direction. The private sector too should take part in businesses generated by renewable energy sector," he told reporters after opening the International Greentech and Eco Products Exhibition and Conference Malaysia 2019 yesterday.

The Prime Minister pointed out that Malaysia is one of the world's biggest manufacturers of good quality solar panels, and even supplied them to the United States.

"We can increase the export of solar panels. This is the direction.

"Before this, the people didn't even know the business. Now, there are a lot of opportunities for business in the renewable energy sector.



**Green solution:** Dr Mahathir and Yeo looking at the Net Zero Carbon Pavilion which was launched at the exhibition and conference.

"So, if they come up with viable proposals, we will support them," said Dr Mahathir.

He rebuffed allegations that renewable energy projects were given to his cronies in the past.

"The fact is that we have to give to somebody. If you don't give anybody at all, the country cannot progress," he said.

Earlier in his keynote speech, Dr Mahathir said climate change affecting the world should not be taken lightly.

He rebranded the 10-year-old Malaysian Green Technology Corporation under the Energy, Science, Technology, Environment And Climate Change Ministry to Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre (MGTCCC).

"A national climate change centre is required to gather climate change related data collection, risk analytics, policy coordination among different levels and aspects of government to ensure Malaysia does not only survive but thrives against global warming," said Dr Mahathir.

Separately, Minister Yeo Bee Yin said there was no need for extra funds for the rebranded centre to perform extra functions.

She said that the centre would allow better coordination with international climate change actions.

"This year, we are doing a lot on renewable energy and collaborations with international agencies on carbon calculator.

"With this centre, international players will have a more focal point for Malaysia and ease international collaborations and climate change funding. We will find a qualified person to chair the national council," she said.