

## **Malaysia has no plans for nuclear power plant - Tun M**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 18 (Bernama) -- The government has no plans to pursue nuclear power to generate electricity in Malaysia amid the risk associated with it, says Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said although the cost of energy production through nuclear power was way cheaper, there was still this lack of knowledge in its handling, especially the safer way to dispose nuclear waste.

"I am against nuclear power because we have had a very bad experience with material producing radiation in the country," he said at the Conference of the Electric Power Supply Industry (CEPSI) 2018 here today.

He also cited the catastrophic nuclear tragedy in 1986, the Chernobyl disaster, which was considered the most disastrous nuclear power plant accident in history both in terms of cost and casualties.

Dr Mahathir said during his tenure as the country's fourth prime minister, the country had to deal with tin tailing (amang) issue, a radiation producing substance originally used as the material in the production of colour television.

As a resolution, the substance was buried in a area covering one square kilometres, resulting in a loss of the area for future development.

"What we learn from that is the waste from radiated material is not easy to dispose," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that the same principle would be applied to nuclear power plant when it

comes to a stage to dispose nuclear material wastes.

"Although science has made tremendous advances in the field of electricity but science has not been able to deal with the waste material after it ceases to be a source of power.

"It may be cheap to generate power from nuclear material but we are not going to do that simply because we are not sure we can get rid of the waste," he said.

He said previous catastrophic nuclear accidents due to nuclear power plant meltdown in Japan and Ukraine served as an example of the risks associated with nuclear power generation.

"I still believe that we don't know enough about nuclear material to make use of it whether in peace or in war," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the country would continue to use fossil materials such as fuel and coal as well as hydro to generate electricity.

"We have a lot of coal in Malaysia but so far we have not fully utilised the coal in Malaysia," he said, adding that the potential areas among others included Selangor, Sabah and Sarawak, he added.

"We feel that we are going to supply enough electricity to this country for a long time," he said.

Meanwhile, on electric vehicles (EV), he said it was still a long way before EV can replace internal combustion engines (ICE) as the main car technology because of the cost constraint.

"Batteries are costly and the car will cost twice as much if you want to use electric driven car compared with ICE.

"For some time to come we are going to use internal combustion engines," he added.

The six-day event, beginning on Monday, attracted more than 2,000 participants from 30 countries who would share their thoughts on current issues impacting the power supply industry.

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