

'Untrustworthy' PTPTN borrowers chalk up RM36 billion in unpaid loans - Mahathir
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 20 (Bernama) – Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today lambasted errant borrowers of the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) loans for their untrustworthiness which he said has resulted in unpaid loans totalling RM36 billion.

The Prime Minister said he was ashamed with this kind of attitude because the borrowers did not have a sense of responsibility when they were trusted with something.

“Sometimes, we find in Malaysia that people are not so very trustworthy. For example, in order to educate Malaysians, we provide them scholarships, we give money for them to study so that they can earn a better income to improve their lifestyle.

“... they study at universities in the country or abroad on the scholarships we’ve given to them, loans actually, but, unfortunately, when they come back they don’t want to repay the loans.

“We have accumulated RM36 billion in unpaid loans to PTPTN. I am ashamed, but they are not. They are earning an income, they can really pay but they just don’t feel like paying,” he said during the premier lecture at Residensi Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) here.

Dr Mahathir urged PTPTN borrowers who had the capacity to repay their loans to be responsible in settling their debts despite earning a low income.

He said even those who earned a monthly income of RM2,000 should be committed to spending about RM100 a month to repay their loans.

During the lecture, Dr Mahathir also spoke of his proposal for Japan to set up of a university branch campus in Malaysia and the importance of learning Japanese values.

He said Malaysia was a good location for the setting up of a branch campus as its involved a much lower cost compared to Japan.

“I suggested (the branch campus) because in Japan everything is very costly now. But if you have a Japanese university here, you can provide Japanese education together with the understanding of the Japanese culture and value system, and the cost of living will be much less so more people will benefit from it.

“On top of it, people from poor countries and poor students can also come and study at the Japanese institution in Malaysia,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was convinced that Malaysia would be successful like Japan if Malaysians possessed the same Japanese value system such as a sense of shame if they failed to deliver well apart from positive values such as being trustworthy and hardworking.

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