

Study on national railway to ensure full benefits - Dr M

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From Kamarul Ariffin Md Yassin

TOKYO, Nov 7 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian government's efforts to get the JR Kyushu Railway Company's cooperation to look into the problems of national railway is to ensure that the services are fully beneficial to the nation and the people, said Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia requested the Japanese company's cooperation to conduct a study so that the roles and benefits of the railway services could be enhanced including in terms of cargo delivery.

"Currently, our train services are almost completed...(including) double tracking and electrification. However, only 30 per cent are being used and there are 70 per cent of unused potential railways," he told Malaysian reporters on the final day of his three-day working visit to Japan.

Dr Mahathir said many large containers were transported by road which was inefficient and would disrupt the traffic due to its large size.

"We have to use railway for transportation of containers and big items. Our railway is electrified but cannot carry containers. In Japan there is a system for trains to move the trade," he said.

Dr Mahathir described his three-day visit to Japan since Monday as very successful and cited a meeting with Japanese businessmen where he was asked many questions pertaining to Malaysia's development.

"They were very friendly and each one of them expressed a desire to help Malaysia's

recovery effort. I believe it was not just a sweet talk. They also showed understanding towards the country's (fiscal) woes," he said.

On Tuesday, Dr Mahathir delivered a keynote address and held a dialogue with over 500 participants at the 36th Japan-Malaysia Economic Association (Jameca)-Malaysia-Japan Economic Association (Majeca) Joint Conference and Malaysian Business Forum.

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