

'Raise amount paid to Kedah'

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ALOR STAR: Penang should increase the current RM10,000 honorarium payment to Kedah for the acquisition of the island and Seberang Prai, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said the current amount, made annually since a century ago, should be increased to reflect modern times and Kedah should pursue this matter with Penang.

"With that kind of money we can't even buy a house and if they do not want to revise, then we can request that Penang Island and Seberang Prai be returned to Kedah," he said jokingly.

Dr Mahathir said he had studied the old agreement made by the British and Kedah in 1800 and that the state had the right to ask for a revision of the old agreement to reflect current times.

He said the original agreement stated that the British would pay Kedah 10,000 Spanish dollars.

"The value of that 10,000 Spanish dollars is about RM100,000 now," he said.

On another note Dr Mahathir said that Kedah should ask Penang to pay

for the water supply which it gave free of charge to Penang.

He said the payment should be made following plans by Penang to privatise water supply services.

He said Singapore and Malacca had to pay a fee for the water they get from Johor.

"It is not my intention to instigate Kedah but the state is poor and yet is willing to give free water to another state which is much richer," he said at a "Thank You" dinner hosted by the Kedah Government on Wednesday.

The dinner was attended by the Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and the Sultanah Tuanku Haminah Hamidon, Raja Muda and Raja Puan Muda of Kedah, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, his wife Datin Seri Sharifah Hamidah Syed Hamid, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and Information Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir.

Dr Mahathir apologised to Kedahans for not fulfilling all the requests for development projects as he did not want to be biased.

"When I was with the Government I could not help the state too much since it would show that I was biased towards my state," he said.



SON OF KEDAH: Sultan Abdul Halim (second from right) hugging Dr Mahathir while Syed Razak (left) applauds during a 'Thank You' dinner by the Kedah Government in Alor Star on Wednesday.