

Mahathir suggests faculty of petroleum engineering for UMS

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KOTA KINABALU: Sabahans will benefit from the setting up of a faculty of petroleum engineering in Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), according to former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed.

According to a survey initiated by Petronas, Sabah will soon be the richest State in the country in natural resources.

"We will therefore need engineers in petrochemical, petroleum engineering and in Carigali, among others. We cannot lose this opportunity just because we do not have the knowledge.

"So I recommend that a petroleum engineering faculty be set up in UMS," he said at the Kinabalu Lecture Series (KLS) organized by UMS yesterday.

According to Mahathir, Sabahans should focus on getting more knowledge about the oil and gas industry as it is

one sector in the country that is developing rapidly.

Malaysia is not a huge producer of crude oil at only about 650,000 barrels a day compared to Arab Saudi which produces 12 million barrels a day, he said, adding that what was important is the policy regulating the national petroleum company, Petronas.

Mahathir disclosed that in many countries including the wealthy Arab countries, their national petroleum companies limit their participation in the the oil and gas industry there to only collecting royalty on the barrels of crude oil produced.

"In Malaysia, the government's income from its oil production is not so much but this is because Petronas' management is different from other national petroleum companies as it takes part in all sectors of the industry from upstream to downstream.

"We conduct Carigali, do tests,

produce oil, market the oil, set up an oil industry and produce several types of oil as well as develop the oil industry not only in the country but also other countries," he said.

From liquefied natural gas factories to natural gas pipelines, all sectors in the oil and gas industry are carried out by Petronas therefore we get to fully enjoy what is reaped by our natural resources, he stressed.

Mahathir has confidence in the faculty and it will allow Sabahans to reap benefits from the oil that will be produced from the state's coastal areas.

"Through this, we will be able to enrich Sabahans so that their social life will be better and they will in turn be able to plan an important role in helping to address problems and in the administration of the country," he said.