

# Strive to make our nation

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# great: Mahathir

**JOHORE BARU, Sat.**  
**Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today Malaysians should make it their life struggle to work towards creating a great nation and people respected by the world.

This dream, the Prime Minister said, could become reality if the people were prepared to make sacrifices.

Opening the National Youth Cooperative (Kobena) vocational training camp at Skudai, about 25 km from here, he said such sacrifices would be in the form of self-discipline and the spirit of hard work.

He was confident that with discipline and hard work, the people and nation would be comparable with other progressive peoples in the world.

## Cowards

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir did not think that efforts to instill the spirit of hard work could pose a problem among the people, particularly Malays because Islam itself tells its followers to work hard for progress.

He regretted that there were many people in the country who spoke about Islam and its struggle, "but only a few practise what they preach."

The Prime Minister said that one of the basic teachings of Islam is that its followers make sacrifices like those recorded in the life of Prophet Ibrahim and his son, Ismail.

He defined sacrifice as a difficult act done not for instant benefit or profit but for future good.

"Likewise, the sacrifice expected of the people to work hard will create a nation the world

will respect," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that a nation or people which was not prepared for sacrifice or hard work would not be able to change their destiny, and instead would remain shackled by backwardness.

"There's nothing in this world which we can gain or achieve easily without determination and discipline," he said.

He was confident that with discipline, the people of Malaysia would be prepared and able to face any challenges, and be capable of achieving anything which appeared difficult in the beginning.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir described people who are undisciplined as cowards who are not capable of accepting challenges.

"If we want to progress and become a respected nation, we must discard the attitude of indiscipline, and be more determined," he said.

## Failures

The Prime Minister said government emphasis on discipline and spirit of hard work came about not because of the interests of the leaders but because of their desire to make Malaysia a nation known for self-help and respected by the world.

On his 'Look East' policy, he explained that it does not conflict with Islam because what is suggested is for the people to emulate the high values and work ethics.

"The values of the Ko-

reans and Japanese to work hard certainly do not conflict with Islam," he added.

He said: "It's this spirit and values which have made the peoples of Korea and Japan great, and it is merely this which we want to emulate.

"But to achieve this we must lay the foundation from now so that the next generation will be disciplined and determined."

Also present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Othman Saat.

The 12-hectare camp was built by Kobena-Sambu, a joint venture company with a South Korean firm, to train skilled workers for the building sector.

The camp's 'graduates' are intended to supply the work force for the new campus of the University of Technology nearby which is being built by Kobena-Sambu.

The first batch of 250 people reported for training last month.

The camp cost \$3.4 million and was built in 3½ months.

He urged the Malays to consider the building of the \$500 million University of Technology Johore solely by bumiputras as a major test of their ability.