

PM: Study why we have fallen behind

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Malaysia should study why it has fallen behind other countries in Asia, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said at independence, Malaysia was second only to Japan in terms of prosperity, although its per capita income then was only US\$200 per year (about M\$500).

However, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore had not only caught up but also overtaken Malaysia, he added. "We have to study why this had happened," he said when addressing Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Berhad staff on the company's 50th anniversary.

The Prime Minister said these countries had progressed because of the attitude of the workers who were loyal, dedicated and hardworking. He noted that workers in the West do not show the same spirit of dedication, adding that these nations were resorting to trade restrictions to remain competitive.

Malaysia, he added, had even been "scolded" for not purchasing \$100 million worth of apples per year. "They do this because they cannot compete," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians must work hard and with dedication to become more progressive.

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He called on Malaysians to practise the same spirit of dedication, which was one of the factors stressed in the Government's Look East Policy.

"If we work hard and with dedication, we will surely succeed. No matter what action the West resort to, they will not be able to hinder the development of the country."

Dr Mahathir said the people must take pride in their work as well as show loyalty to the company, race and country.

"If we merely work to earn a salary, the company will not progress. We will also not be effective in our work because we will feel bored all the time.

"On the other hand, if a person takes pride in his achievements, as well as that of the company, he would place emphasis on his work so the company would progress even further."

If Malaysians had such an attitude and the country in turn achieved success, the people themselves would lead a more prosperous life, he said.

The Prime Minister said he was confident the Utusan Melayu employees had this attitude, having survived for 50 years. With the same dedication, Utusan Melayu would continue to survive for another 50 years, he added.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, also commissioned the company's "Goss Urbanite" press.