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Mahathir-steel, '''

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KEMAMAN, Feb 19⁹¹ (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the success of the HICOM-owned steel mill near here is living proof of the ability of the Malays in high-technology industries.

The Prime Minister said the Perwaja Steel Sdn Bhd -- a project of the Heavy Industries Corporation of Malaysia -- has totally dismissed notions that the Malays would not do well in such an industry.

+Malays form 90 per cent of Perwaja's work force. I don't think the other communities will feel slighted if we say Perwaja's success signifies the achievement of the Malays in modern industries,+ he said.

Addressing Perwaja workers during an official tour of the mill today, the Prime Minister said the Malays were in fact able to compete with the other communities in attaining self-advancement.

In this country, he said, the pursuit of progress transcended racial boundaries as the key to success laid with one's determination to self-improve.

The Prime Minister urged the Malays not to feel that they were poor achievers in business compared to the other communities and allow the feeling to make them resent or find fault with others.-- more

♥19/02/16-43MST

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Mahathir-steel 2 Kemaman '''

+By blaming others, will they put us back on the right track to success. We can't ask them to achieve less just to let us succeed. It's impossible,+ he said.

He said a revamped-Perwaja under Tan Sri Eric Chia as managing director, has performed well proving that Malays who were willing to discard their inferiority complex have great potentials.

While commending the strong presence of inter-racial goodwill in Perwaja the Prime Minister said: + This is the first time a Malay-majority work force strives to retain a non-Malay management+.

In lighter vein he said:+ It was me who changed Perwaja's Malay management to a non-Malay one. I thought it would fail. But thank God it has succeeded.+

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Malays should, as were the Japanese, feel ashamed if they failed to accomplish a task entrusted upon them.

The Prime Minister believed anyone wanting to succeed must regard failure as something very shameful.-- more

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Mahathir-steel 3 Kemaman '''

+If some quarters say Malays are failures, we must prove them wrong by coming up with achievements,+ he said.

At a press conference later, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said to protect Perwaja's interests, the government would impose certain restrictions on investors intending to set up steel mills in Kemaman.

+We will ensure that their products are not similar to Perwaja's and meant for export,+ he said.

The Prime Minister mentioned a few companies from South Korea, Japan and Taiwan which were keen in putting up steel mills in the country.

He said Perwaja's performance was very encouraging as despite having one of three +transformers+ out of order, it was still able to manufacture a substantial volume of steel compared to the level attained by the previous management.-- More

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Mahathir-steel 4 Kemaman '''

With all three +transformers+ working, the mill could produce up to 1.2 million tonnes of steel annually.

Under the old management, the mill could only produce 600,000 tonnes, the Prime Minister said.

Perwaja was now entering an expansion phase to optimise production and it was expected to settle its accumulated debts before the year 2000, he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Perwaja might probably be listed on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange in the next two years but a study of its performance was needed first before going public.

Also present were Perwaja chairman Tan Sri Zainal Abidin Sulong and Tan Sri Eric Chia. -- Bernama

♥19/02/17-51MST