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KUALA LUMPUR, May 16 (Bernama) -- Teachers have a major role to play in achieving the objective of making Malaysia a developed nation by 2020, according to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

This was because teachers provided the foundation for the building of the nation's manpower resources, he said in a message to the souvenir programme on the occasion of the National Level Teachers Day celebrations today.

Teachers should be dedicated and sensitive to all changes and challenges as this was important in providing a sound education and creating a knowledgeable society, he said.

A sound education would develop the student's talents to the fullest and make them useful citizens, he added.

Education Minister Datuk Dr Sulaiman Daud launched the celebrations with the theme 'Towards an Excellent Education' at Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Serdang near here. -- more

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Mahathir - teachers 2 Kuala Lumpur

The Prime Minister hoped the theme of this year's Teachers Day celebrations would provide teachers with a new zeal and determination to provide an even more meaningful service.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also expressed his thanks to teachers for their immense contributions in guiding and teaching the younger generation.

Addressing the function, Datuk Dr Sulaiman said as agents of change, teachers should work towards achieving the aspirations of the 'Vision of 2020'.

They should strive towards making this vision a reality, he added.

Speaking to reporters later, Datuk Dr Sulaiman said he had applied to the Finance Ministry to increase the allocation to finance the teaching of 'Living Skills' in schools.

The present allocation of \$20 a year per student was found to be inadequate to buy the necessary equipment for the subject, he said.

Technical education, which the subject stressed, was important towards attaining the objective of 2020, Datuk Dr Sulaiman said. -- Bernama

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