

# PM: Time for the East to overtake West

SEREMBAN, Sun. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the golden age of the Western civilisation was coming to an end because they had succumbed to their weaknesses.

He added that the Western civilisation was waning and the West no longer had the will to strengthen their own civilisation.

He said history had always shown that the fall of one civilisation would be replaced by another and it was time for the Eastern nations to overtake the West.

"The rise of Japan and South Korea showed that the Asian countries could do as well if not better than the Western nations. Japan has developed so well that it can now buy the whole of the United States.

It did not matter if it took a long time to achieve the status of a developed country so long as the development was built on a strong and sure foundation, Dr Mahathir said when briefing 2,000 civil servants and community leaders on his 2020 Vision.

He reiterated that Malaysia was not interested in being labelled a newly industrialised country as it was a trick of the West to make use of the label to undermine the country's economy.

The Prime Minister said the Western countries could no longer compete with the Japanese.

"The main type of car being exported by the United States is Honda which is a Japanese car.

"In Britain, they produce a car called Rover Sterling which is in fact the Japanese Honda Legend," he added.

He said there was no reason why Malaysia could not emulate or surpass the Japanese.

"We must become as far-sighted as the Japanese and reinvest our profits in order to achieve long-term growth.

"Profits must be used to improve products and productivity and not just to line the pockets of shareholders and managers.

"Managers and administrators must emulate the loyalty of the Japanese who do not skip from one company to another just for the sake of higher pay," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said the people must shed the low self-esteem attitude.

He said another factor which would be important towards achieving developed country status was the stability of the country and democracy.

"The people must be able to choose their own leaders through the ballot boxes and if they wanted to change the leaders they must do so through the ballot boxes.

"But we shall stick to our own definition of democracy which gives priority to the rights of the society rather than individual rights.