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Mahathir-wealth

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today it will be meaningless for the people to jostle for the nation's wealth when they do not cooperate to enhance economic growth.

He said rapid economic growth was necessary so that the people would be able to continue to enjoy the nation's prosperity, especially so with the ever increasing population of the country.

The rate of economic growth should be higher than the rate of population growth so that the people would not plunge into poverty in the future, he said when opening the 38th MCA general assembly here.

+It is better for us to distribute the increasingly abundant wealth than for us to jostle for whatever is available to a point of causing a riot and instability, which will result in economic slowdown,+ he said.

The Prime Minister also drew attention to the country's population, which rose from seven million at the time of independence in 1957 to the present 18.6 million. -- more

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He said that if the people then had been overzealous in grabbing the country's wealth when there was no economic growth as yet, the people would now be in a sorry state.

+According to the government's estimate, the population of Malaysia in 2050 will reach 70 million and this means that we have to strive harder to improve the nation's wealth so that the standard of living will not decline due to the increase in population,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir cited the case of several former colonies which became poor because they were bent on distributing wealth while ignoring economic growth.

+... after distributing whatever wealth was available, they cast aside all foreign managers, resulting in negative economic growth and the people becoming even poorer,+ he said.

He called on Malaysians to maintain political stability so that the government could focus on nation building and bring more prosperity.

In this respect, he urged all concerned to actively strive to achieve the objectives of the National Development Policy, the Sixth Malaysia Plan and the vision to make Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020. -- Bernama

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