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UP TO M'SIANS TO CHART THEIR FUTURE, SAYS MAHATHIR

Mahathir - future

By Syed Jamil Jaafar

(P)

NEW YORK, Sept 26<sup>91</sup> (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Wednesday Malaysia must be given the freedom to chart its own future and not to be forced to conform to what others feel is good for the country.

+If there is such a thing as human rights, let those rights also extend to the choice of the people of Malaysia,+ he said.

+The way forward for Malaysia may not meet with everyone's approval but it is our choice.+

Addressing the Asia Society at a luncheon meeting here on the theme +The Malaysian Economy: The Way Forward+, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said what Malaysia required was less of the all-knowing do-gooders and their drive +to liberate us from ourselves.+

+It must be accepted that there are many roads to heaven, the idea of a monolithic all-purpose model cannot be accepted by us,+ he said.-- more

♥26/09/10-33MST

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Attention editors: correction ''

Repetition correcting garbled third para.

Mahathir - future 2 New York

He said governments should also not hide behind non-governmental organisations and nations should not feel unhappy if Malaysia retaliated in the same manner when they deliberately run the country down.

+After all, the so-called civilised nations have more skeletons in their cupboard than Malaysia has,+ he added.

Explaining +Vision 2020+ to turn Malaysia into a developed nation by the year 2020, he said the concept did not simply focus on per capita income but on the quality of life and morality.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the hedonistic materialism of present models was not for Malaysia.

+We hope the rest of the world will give us this freedom of choice and not harass us into conformity in the name of freedom.+ -- more

♥26/09/11-01MST

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Mahathir - future 3 New York

The theme of the Prime Minister's speech was similar to that of his address to the 46th United Nations General Assembly Tuesday in which he dwelt at length on democracy and the right of developing countries to have their own interpretation of democracy.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had deviated from the development model promoted by the countries of the north through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) when the colonies of the west gained independence.

The model had stipulated that the newly-independent country should extract and export raw materials and commodities to the north and with the earning, pay from imported goods, machinery and technology, also from the north.

It also called for the opening up of forests to plant crops using chemicals and fertilisers from the north.

The model led to overproduction and lower prices for commodities and deterioration in the terms of trade for the developing countries. -- more

▼26/09/10-44MST

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Mahathir - future 4 New York

For more than a decade now Malaysia had opted to concentrate on economic development and to reduce politicking to the minimum.

And for the country to grow fast, it had to industrialise as the agricultural sector could not support a rapidly growing population which grew from 10.7 million in 1970 to 18.3 million in 1990.

The Prime Minister said when forays into industry were launched, there was a lot of criticism, especially against ventures into heavy industries such as steel-making and car manufacturing.

But today these enterprises and many others are showing handsome profits, making the critics less vocal though they remain sceptical.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also told the audience of leading businessmen that Malaysia had always been conscious of the need for political stability to achieve economic growth. -- more

▼26/09/10-46MST

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Mahathir - future 5 New York

From the very beginning, the various races in the country set out to formulate a system of working together.

The deliberate power-sharing among the various ethnic groups had resulted in stability in the country as evidenced by its high rate of development.

+We think we have the correct formula and we will stick to it with a fair deal of tenacity,+ the Prime Minister said.

+We also believe that the equitable sharing of national wealth by all is also essential for that stability.+ -- Bernama