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MAHATHIR: GOVERNMENT WILLING TO RISK BEING UNPOPULAR

Mahathir-demand

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JITRA, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the government could not meet all the people's demands merely to become popular.

The Prime Minister said that if the government went overboard in meeting the demands of the people, the nation's economy would be affected and the people would suffer.

According to him, there had cases of national leaders who sought popularity by giving in to the people's demands, thus resulting in the decline of the nation's economy, increase in the prices of goods and hardship among the people.

+That is why in Malaysia, at times we do not entertain certain demands by the people because we know it will be negative in the long-term although it will not make the government popular,+ he said.

He was speaking when simultaneously launching the national-level Caring Malaysia Programme, the Jitra branch of the National Youth Vocational Institute and the state-level youth assembly, at the institute here. -- more

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He said that decisions made by the government were not based on the personal interest of its leader but based on the interest of the nation.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that Malaysians were fortunate because the nation's economy had grown rapidly at a rate of 10 per cent at a time when many other developing countries experienced an economic downturn.

The people should be positive and responsible, without regard for personal interest, in line with the Caring Malaysia Programme, he added.

Referring to Vision 2020, he said that the government perceived the objective on the successful implementation of its five-year plan and its long-term 20-year plan.

Guided by the success, it was not impossible for Malaysia to achieve developed nation status in 30 years time, he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir expressed regret that some students in universities in the country do not know how to be grateful and held campaigns to criticise the government.

Also present at the function were his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff and Youth and Sports Minister Haji Annuar Musa. -- Bernama

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