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JITRA, Mon. — Malaysians should be proud that the country has achieved rapid development compared with certain European countries, especially in economic management. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

The sound economy has

created vast employment opportunities for the people while certain European countries are facing unemployment, he added.

"As a result of the rapid economic growth, we have to allow the recruitment of foreign labour owing to the manpower shortage," he said after joining hundreds

of Muslims to break fast at Melele mosque.

"If we do not allow the employment of foreign workers, the country will face problems in getting sufficient manpower."

Therefore, the Prime Minister urged the people to be grateful with the country's rapid economic growth and

the harmonious atmosphere prevailing in the multi-racial nation.

He cited the plight of the Rohingyas in Myanmar, whose lives were being threatened by the armies.

"Unlike in our country, the Rohingyas are facing difficulties in getting food and even performing their

rapid development

religious obligations."

"But Muslims in the country are living in peace and have the freedom to perform their religious obligations."

"We should be grateful to live in such a peaceful and harmonious country."

The Prime Minister said more industries would be brought into the country so

that Malaysians would be internationally respected.

Several steel mills would be opened in Guron and more industries would be set up in Kedah.

He hoped that the people would grab the job opportunities created.

In Kota Kinabalu, Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba

said the outcome of the registration exercise on immigrants in Sabah, completed last year, will be discussed at the National Security Council (NSC) meeting scheduled to be held at the end of this month.

The meeting will be chaired by Dr Mahathir who is NSC chairman.

Ghafar said the Special Task Force (STF), established by the NSC to look into the problem, was determining the status of the immigrants who had registered with it.

The exercise, which also covered Labuan, was conducted from April 1990 to June last year.