

▼06/08/11-44MST

CNS0806

R GE 06-08 00186 EA934

eng mes

OPPOSITION ONLY DELAYS THE PROCESS OF CHANGE, SAYS MAHATHIR

Mahathir-opposition

bm

92 (P)
KUANTAN, Aug 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today any obstruction or opposition which the government usually faced when it introduced change would only delay the process as change was bound to come in the end.

On the other hand, if the habit of accepting change was cultivated, the process of change would be smooth and organised and would bring immense benefits at a faster pace, he added.

+Those who go all out to oppose change will not succeed for in the end change will take place all the same. Only loss comes from the attitude of not accepting change,+ he said when launching the National Farmers, Livestock Breeders and Fishermen's Day celebrations at the state agricultural park in Bandar Indera Mahkota.

He said efforts to ensure the success of the +Vision of Developing Agriculture+ required the people to learn from the experience of fishermen living on islands which had become tourist centres in recent years. -- more

▼06/08/11-47MST

CNS0809

R GE 06-08 00175 EA935

eng mes

Mahathir-opposition 2 Kuantan

+The fishermen were among the poorest in the country and had a bleak future. But when the tourism industry developed and progressed, fishermen who had never been to school saw the opportunities from the industry,+ he added.

The Prime Minister said apart from working in hotels, the fishermen had set up chalets on their own and turned their fishing boats into tourist vessels. Their income had doubled and tripled to the extent of adversely affecting the fisheries industry.

The +Vision of Developing Agriculture+ is the theme of the national level celebrations this year.

Dr Mahathir said the appropriate approach towards overcoming the problem affecting the fishing industry was to use bigger boats and go into deepsea fishing.

He added: +There is the likelihood of deepsea fishermen earning a better income, but there is a need for radical change in attitude because deepsea fishermen will have to be on the high seas for weeks if not months.+ -- more

▼06/08/11-49MST

R GE 06-08 00184 EA936

eng mes

Mahathir-opposition 3 Kuantan

+Can we change the attitude of fishermen? If not, there will be a shortage of fish or we'll have to depend on foreigners to get our supply.+

Dr Mahathir reminded farmers, livestock breeders and fishermen that they would face big challenges as the year 2020 approached because of changes in international trade practices, market protection and competition from countries producing the same agricultural goods.

These problems could not be viewed lightly because the agricultural sector was still a major source of income for the majority of the population who lived in the rural areas, he said.

The growth of the country's agricultural sector remained at four per cent as in 1990.

In view of this, the agricultural sector's contribution to the Gross Domestic Income (GDP) dropped to 17.2 per cent compared with 18.8 per cent the previous year.

The not so encouraging growth of the agricultural sector was a sign that the sector would have to face many challenges in the future, he said.

-- more

▼06/08/11-51MST

R GE 06-08 00195 EA937.

eng mes

Mahathir-opposition 4 Kuantan

The problems faced by the agricultural sector included the migration of youth from rural to urban areas because they were more educated and the manufacturing sector provided better income and more comfortable jobs.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia could overcome the shortage of manpower by taking in foreign workers but this would give rise to many problems in the future.

Malaysia could also reduce its agricultural output and depend on imports for its food supply but the country would face a food shortage during an emergency, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the problem of labour shortage in the agricultural sector was faced by many countries which switched to the manufacturing industry for their economic growth.

Industrial countries faced with a labour shortage would go for machinery instead but changes would have to occur in agriculture methods before the switch over could take place.

He added: +Machinery had indeed been used for a long time in the agricultural field but a high level of efficiency could not be attained because of management constraints for small agricultural holdings.+ -- more

▼06/08/11-52MST

CNS0816

R GE 06-08 00159 EA938

eng mes

Mahathir-opposition 5 (last) Kuantan

+In view of this even the best machinery cannot be used efficiently. Padi fields, orchards and vegetable plots are still small and managed by individuals who usually ran short of capital.+

Dr Mahathir said if big estates were to be combined they would only form half the total acreage of smallholdings but the total production of latex by estates was double that of all the latex produced by the smallholders.

As such, it was not impossible for padi growers and fruit and vegetable cultivators to increase yields if their holdings were managed on an estate basis, he added.

He said future farmers should come from those with education and be trained to use modern equipment and efficient in estate management.

+Estates can be managed by professionals, probably the children of farmers. This is our vision for agriculture,+ he added. -- Bernama