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GOVERNMENT WANTS TO MAKE MALAYSIA RESPECTED, SAYS MAHATHIR

Mahathir - progress

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MACHANG, Oct 23 (Bernama) -- The Government <sup>aspires</sup> to <sup>make</sup> Malaysia a developed world power able to decide on aid for backward countries facing problems, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The keen interest and efforts of the people would enable the country to achieve this objective, he said.

+The objective may not be achieved today, tomorrow or even in 2020 but with all the measures being taken from now on, it will nevertheless be achieved,+ he said when opening the Kelantan Umno Convention themed +Bersatu Selamatkan Kelantan+ at the Sekolah Menengah Machang here.

He said:+What is the use of saving ourselves when, we cannot help our brothers in Somalia who are weak and have no mean:;,+

+If we are developed, strong, we'll be respected in the eyes of the world and will not be afraid to engage in constructive criticism of other developed countries,+ he said. -- more

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Mahathir - progress 2 Machang

+In the past when Malaysia (still backward) gave its views, world powers did not take much notice but now they feel threatened,+ he said:

With a view to becoming a developed nation, the Government came up with Vision 2020 so that the people and the country would be on par with other developed nations of the world without, however, neglecting the religion, culture and race.

Dr Mahathir also hit out at those championing the vision of the hereafter without seriously taking into account worldly obligations.

He advised the people to strike a balance between spiritual and material needs to achieve success in both.

Towards this end, the people should have knowledge of this world and the hereafter and have high technological skills. -- more

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He said +Wawasan Akhirat+ was coined as a political 'strategy to get the people 's support.

Leaders, who came up with that vision, had asked their supporters to give priority to works concerned with the hereafter but they themselves were enjoying prosperity in this world, the Prime Minister said.

He said that while asking the people to struggle for the hereafter, such leaders in turn were struggling to grab opportunities to become Menteri Besar, Executive Councillors and assemblymen.

He urged the people to be thankful for the peace and prosperity in this country.

Turning to Kelantan, Dr Mahathir said the people should realise what they had been given by the PAS Government and a small section of the Parti Semangat. 46 after ruling the state for two years.

The people can make their own assessment as to what PAS had done apart from sacking officers, penghulus and imams out of revenge.

He said the Federal Government would continue to give aid which was due to the people of Kelantan even though they rejected the Barisan Nasional in the last general election. -- Bernama

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