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MALAYS WILL BE CRIPPLED WITHOUT COMPETITION, SAYS MAHATHIR

Mahathir-industry

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KOTA BAHARU, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- The Malays will be crippled if they are not given a chance to compete with the other races in the country's industrialisation process, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The prime minister said the Malays were capable of becoming skilled workers like the other races if they had confidence in themselves and a chance to prove it.

+If we don't give them a chance because we want to protect them from competition, in the end the Malays will be crippled,+ he told reporters after opening a Wanita Umno workcamp at the Kota Baharu Polytechnic in Kok Lanas.

He was asked to comment on Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah's statement last Friday that two former prime ministers, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman and the late Tun Razak did not implement industrial policies for fear that the Malays would lose out.

+This is what the English call 'sour grapes', because he was unable to do it when he was minister and when other people could, he said it was not nice,+ Dr Mahathir said. -- more

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Asked whether the capability of the Malays as skilled workers had been proven at the 1992 International Skills Championship which he attended in Kuala Lumpur three days ago, the prime minister he was satisfied with their work.

+Actually we found in the skills test that Malay workers were more efficient than Chinese or Indian workers and this shows that we have the ability...only we must have confidence in our ability and be given a chance.+

+For example, if a person has never walked, his legs will become weak,+ he added.

The competition under the prime minister's patronage was jointly organised by the New Straits Times Press, Works Ministry, Malaysian Master Builders Association and Bumiputera Building Contractors Association.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said Umno members must understand the role they had to play in achieving +Vision 2020+ to make Malaysia a developed nation. -- more

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He said this objective was important to make the people more prosperous and free from foreign suppression.

+By becoming a free people in 2020 with capability and strength on par with the developed countries, no one can suppress us like they do to countries that are indebted to them,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Ali returned to Kuala Lumpur this afternoon after a one-day visit to Kelantan. -- Bernama

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