

Mahathir-agri

MALAYSIANS HAVE RESOURCES, ABILITY TO CATCH UP WITH DEVELOPED NATIONS

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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 1 (Bernama) <sup>9</sup> Malaysians have the resources and ability to catch up with developed communities and now only require the determination to pursue them, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We, who are behind, must run much faster to catch up with those in front; if we run only at their speed, they will be in front and we will remain at the rear," he said.

"We must not be taken in by the arguments of the developed communities because they want us to move slowly so that they can remain ahead of us," he said when launching the National Agriculture Policy (1992-2010) at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

He said the people could catch up with the developed communities so long as they were determined and confident.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that the developed communities would continue to look down on Malaysians if they could not match them in resources and ability. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian race would be wiped out from this world if it did not keep changing with the times.

History had shown that one-time strong communities such as the Latin, Roman and Byzantine societies had been wiped out because they adhered to their ancient way of life without taking into account the changing world.

"If we are unable to adapt ourselves to the changing surroundings, we also will fail and be wiped out from this world," he said.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians had proven they were capable of doing things which they once thought was impossible, such as manufacturing cars, televisions and radios.

"We need to change our thinking and consider the best method to suit the times," he said. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said an 18-year time frame had been set for the agriculture policy because the government realised that the situation would change after that.

"The new policy took into account changes in the national agriculture policy and national industrial policy, he said."

Although the country was headed for industrialisation, it had to continue with its food production industry to ensure food supply, he said.

"We have to plant padi to guarantee sufficient food supply during an emergency," he added.

Dr Mahathir reiterated his advice to farmers, fishermen and livestock breeders to step up productivity by boldly attempting the use of modern techniques.

The new agriculture policy replaces the National Agriculture Policy formulated in 1984. It encompasses the needs and aspirations of the National Development Policy and Vision 2020. -- Bernama