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Mahathir-vision

DON'T FORGET ROOTS WHEN THE NATION IS DEVELOPED, SAYS PM

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from Ali Mamat

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Aug 1 (Bernama) -- The people should never forget their background to the extent of setting aside high noble and moral values when the Vision 2020 objective to make Malaysia a developed nation is achieved, Prime Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed said tonight.

He said the objective of the vision was not only to make Malaysia a rich country in terms of material achievements but for its people to be rich in knowledge and intellectual power and not to depend on others to chart the country's course and future.

"When that objective is achieved, Malaysians must always be humble, not proud or arrogant, and responsible to their families, society and country," Dr Mahathir said at a dinner with Malaysian citizens at the residence of Malaysian High Commissioner to Brunei Datuk Haji Mustaffa Mohammad, here.

Present were Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi and Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud. The prime minister arrived here today for a three-day official visit to Brunei. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the progress Malaysia wanted to achieve through the vision was not the progress enjoyed by some developed countries where there were signs of moral decadence.

"We do not want to emulate the current developed countries," he said, adding that the responsibility of making the vision a success rested not only on Malaysians back home but on all Malaysians, wherever they were.

He said the responsibility rested not only on the young because although the old would not be able to taste the fruits their efforts "it is something to leave for our descendants so that they can become respected citizens."

The prime minister called on Malaysians overseas to nurture the spirit of nationalism and safeguard the country's good name so that Malaysia would not be looked down on.

"Malaysians living in other countries must act as its unofficial ambassadors by always being united and steering clear of behaviour that can have adverse effects on the country," he said.

He also said the racial harmony enjoyed by Malaysia now had helped to further speed up the achievement of development. -- more

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"God willing, through the democratic process that we practise, we will succeed in setting up an efficient administrative machinery and attain a level of development to make Malaysia a model for other developing countries," he added.

He said that besides being free from outside pressure, Malaysians of various races were free to move about without any fear or suspicion of each other, unlike in some countries like Bosnia.

At the dinner, Dr Mahathir was presented with a 13.6kg cake by the Malaysian Citizens Committee in Brunei to mark his 67th birthday which had passed.

There are over 25,000 Malaysians living in Brunei, or about 10 per cent of the population of this country. -- Bernama

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▼02/08/00-20MST