

Moral values vital, says PM

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By Farush Khan

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today that an organisation or community could only be considered successful when it is able to blend materialistic and moral values.

He said that moral values and ethics were important to bring about a strong spiritual base for the people's quest of progress.

These values would create social conscience among the people, giving them a clear understanding of the importance of liberal attitudes, tolerance and social justice in a plural society.

"Economic values must be supported and complemented with aesthetic values and beauty," he said when opening Public Bank's Vision Garden (*Taman Wawasan*) here.

Dr Mahathir said that the perfection of an institution should not be measured by the value of money, profits or material achievements alone.

"They must be balanced with other values like the love for beauty, art, culture and excellence in sports activities.

Dr Mahathir said that a greater part of the aspiration to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020 involved rapid development and industrialisation.

"In other words, we must produce an industrialised society which is efficient and can meet local and foreign demand.

pared to beautify the cities with decoration as none of these things would be appreciated and maintained by the residents.

"In the end, the cities become gloomy and the atmosphere makes their life more uncomfortable," he said, adding that such a situation would also not be conducive to efforts to promote business, art and culture.

Dr Mahathir said it was for this reason that the nine challenges spelt out in Vision 2020 were assimilated with moral values and ethics as important factors to develop the country in all areas.

"These values will produce a Malaysian society in line with Vision 2020. They will bring us to development and progress without loss or neglecting social aspects," he said.

On Public Bank's Vision Garden, he said that it would help in the Kuala Lumpur beautification programme and instil a sense of beauty among the people.

"The Government is determined to make Kuala Lumpur a garden city for tourists and locals," Dr Mahathir said.

At present, he said, there are only 667 hectares of open areas in Kuala Lumpur which could be turned into recreational areas and therefore, good planning was necessary in developing them.

"By the year 2020, it is expected that 70 per cent of the Malaysian population

"When this happens, we cannot run from the pressure of commercial values in life which insist on profit alone. With that, we should not put aside other equally important values in the development process towards a healthy and united nation.

He said that achievements and successes which were only based on a specific value would bring about instability to physical and spiritual development.

This, he said, was unhealthy.

Dr Mahathir reminded the people to learn from the mistakes of Western countries which were facing a lot of social problems for concentrating on materialism and profit and rejecting other values.

"Their cities are now facing decay with roads full of potholes, rubbish dumped everywhere and gardens not taken care of, and are dangerous to visitors," he said.

Their citizens also did not have "civic pride" and they caused areas surrounding them to be dirty.

No one, he said, was pre-

will live in towns and they certainly need gardens like this to relax their mind, foster good relations and carry out recreational activities," he said.

After the opening ceremony, the Prime Minister touched the "Time Capsule" which keeps all materials about the bank and will only be opened at noon on the first Monday of August 2020.

The capsule will enable the people in that year to see how Public Bank looked like in 1993.

It will, among other things, preserve a copy of a working paper on "Malaysia — The Way Forward" which contains the Prime Minister's statement on Vision 2020.

At the function, bank president Tan Sri Dr Teh Hong Piow presented a cheque for RM20,000 to president of the Girl Guides Association, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, the wife of the Prime Minister.

Also present was Public Bank Berhad chairman Tan Sri Thong Yaw Hong.