

PM: Don't allow any differences

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By Farush Khan

KUALA TERENGGANU, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on policy-makers and government officers to put aside whatever differences they may have and strive to take the country to greater heights.

In any organisation, especially in such a big one as the administration, there was bound to be misunderstanding but this should never be allowed to bring about adverse effects on the performance of their duties, the Prime Minister said.

Instead, they must devote themselves towards improving the people's livelihood and the country's development, he said.

"Today Malaysia is more than a developing country. We are grateful for this, but we must remember this is possible because its economy and politics are stable," Dr Mahathir said at a luncheon address to government employees at the Menteri Besar's residence.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad and State Executive Councillors were also present at the lunch.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here today on a two-day visit to Terengganu, reminded them that development could not be carried out smoothly without proper planning and effective implementation aided by the right attitude.

He was glad that Terengganu had been able to carry out many development projects in the past few years, made possible partly by the income through the royalty payments it received from the oil and gas industries in the State.

He said that Terengganu was getting five per cent royalty or about half a billion ringgit a year from its petroleum resources and had been labelled the Kuwait of Malaysia.

But these resources would not help develop any country if they were not properly tapped or utilised, he said.

"There may be countries with these resources, but they are not developed because they do not utilise them. In fact, some have even been colonised.

"This shows that with rich resources, a country may not necessarily become wealthy unless it has the expertise and the ability to tap and utilise them," he said.

Malaysia, he said, had able officers whose performance had improved through training.

"But we are not satisfied. We want to improve further so that we can restructure our society to become self-reliant and able to maintain the spirit of independence," he said.

Towards this, Menteri Besar, Executive Councillors, senior officers and staff must be responsible and cooperate with each other.

"They must put aside petty differences which could disrupt their work," he said.

Malaysia was able to carry out its development projects smoothly now because of its efficient administration, he said, adding that its achievements had made Malaysia become known as a model country.

"But we must not be arrogant. We must be humble and continue to improve our performance," he added.

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