

CNS4295

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Mahathir-Successor

MAHATHIR BELIEVES HIS SUCCESSOR WILL CONTINUE THE PRESENT POLICIES

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov. 15 (Bernama) - ⁹³ Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed confidence that his successor would continue with the policies set by the present government to steer the country towards achieving developed nation status by the year 2020.

The Prime Minister said based on the tone of his speeches, he was confident that his successor shared his opinions and those of other Cabinet ministers as well as the people's desire to fulfill Vision 2020.

"The noises he has been making appears to be in line with what we all (the present government) believe and what I believe," he said in a dialogue with participants of the two-day international conference on trade and investment opportunities in Malaysia entitled "Malaysia: Powerhouse of the 90s", here.

Dr Mahathir was asked by one of the participants whether he was satisfied that his successor would continue the policies laid down by him, especially in making Malaysia a developed country by the year 2020. -- more

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▼15/11/14-15MST

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Dr Mahathir, who answered 13 questions from the floor during hour-long dialogue, said leadership changes over the years in Malaysia had not caused any radical changes in policies.

Changes in leadership since the time of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first prime minister, to the late Tun Abdul Razak, followed by the late Tun Hussein Onn and himself, had practically seen no real changes in the country's policies except for their different styles of approach, he added.

"I have really no worry that after I'm gone there will be any changes. But I can assure you that you can continuously invest in Malaysia after I'm gone because they (his successors) could just be the same kind of people as they are," he said.

This was because the past leadership had always been successful in ensuring that their successors continued the policies laid down by them and he was confident that he would be able to do so.

He said unless something really tragic or disastrous happened to Malaysia in the future, the same government would continue to remain in power "for quite a long time". -- more

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He said the government was able to maintain its present position for quite a long period due to its sensitivity towards the feelings of the people and it was careful in its approach to matters involving the people.

Dr Mahathir was also asked whether his stand against developed countries, especially the United States, had affected investments in Malaysia.

He said there was no evidence that his remarks about certain developed countries had caused the business community of those countries to lose interest in Malaysia.

"But in any case, I'm nasty towards governments, not business people. Business people have a different view point," he added.

He said governments might censure Malaysia for its labour policy whereas the business community thought otherwise as they were more interested to invest in a country like Malaysia where there was no labour problem.

"So I find that there is a total dichotomy between governments and business people and this has enabled us to get investments from the private sector while thumbing our noses at the governments of the countries," he added. -- more

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Another participant asked whether the governments of Malaysia and the Philippines were willing to put to rest the Sabah issue so as to ensure Asean could move forward positively.

Dr Mahathir said without putting to rest the Philippines' claim on Sabah, the two Asean countries could still continue to foster an active relationship.

"We realise, of course, that successive governments in the Philippines would like to settle this problem but the structure of Philippines politics is such that it is impossible for any government to take any step to get rid of the problem that we have," he added.

As such, he said during President Fidel Ramos' visit to Malaysia earlier this year, they agreed to forget about the problem and concentrate on the more positive aspects of the two countries' relationship.

Malaysia had already encouraged its businessmen to invest in the Philippines after he and Ramos agreed that both countries should increase trading volume, he added.

"I would not bother or worry about this problem anymore. I don't think the Philippines is going to go to war with us in order to recover Sabah," he said. -- Bernama

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