

05 AUG 1996

Mahathir-Habit

BE WORKAHOLICS, STOP INDISCRIMINATE THROWING OF RUBBISH, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told Malaysians today that they must become workaholics and stop the habit of throwing rubbish all around them as Malaysia progresses towards a developed country status.

"To be developed, the culture must also be developed," he said in his keynote address at the national convention on the Seventh Malaysia Plan, here.

He stressed that as the Seventh Malaysia Plan was part of the process to achieve the developed nation status by 2020, hard work remained the "sine qua non" of success in every field of human endeavour.

"There is nothing wrong about working hard. Working for pay is more honourable than begging. Working very hard for more pay is even more honourable," he said.

At the same time, Dr Mahathir said, Malaysians should immediately stop the habit of throwing rubbish indiscriminately or forfeit the right to be the model for other developing countries.

"If we become a developed country in 2020, we cannot have any pride of achievement if we have not discarded the habit of destroying our surroundings," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the successful people and nations of the world had all been known for their dedication and hard work and if the Seventh Malaysia Plan was to succeed, Malaysians must become workaholics.

He said Malaysians must avoid and regard with distaste the attitude that the world or the community owed them a living.

"They owe us nothing. We owe it to ourselves to earn an honest living," he said at the three-day convention jointly organised by the Malaysian Economic Association and the Penang Free School Foundation.

The prime minister said it would be suicidal to increase wages without increasing output or value added.

"If we do not want to commit economic suicide then our workers will have to work harder or they will have to acquire more skills so as to increase productivity," he said, adding that the same applied to the executives if they wanted more pay.

Stressing that a developed country did not just imply higher per capita income and living standard, Dr Mahathir said the cultural aspects must also be developed and bad habits should be discarded.

"While we want to preserve our culture, there are aspects of our culture which we would like to demolish. Among these is the habit of throwing rubbish all around us," he said.

He noted that while people like to be in clean places such as clean picnic sites, they also leave rubbish strewn all around without caring for the feelings of other people.

"We think that someone should be around to clean up after us. There can never be enough workers to clean up if the whole population scatters rubbish all over the country," he said.

Saying that touristic and other developments must never ignore the environment, Dr Mahathir said it had been shown that preservation of the environment had enhanced the value and the potential earnings of the projects concerned. -- BERNAMA

AZZ AH JK