

21 MAY 1996

Mahathir-Shultz

U.S. CAN LEARN FROM VISION 2020, SAYS FORMER STATE SECRETARY

By: Salmy Hashim

SAN FRANCISCO, May 21 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's style of leadership won praise on Monday from former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, who gave credit to the Malaysian Prime Minister for leading the nation towards dynamic growth through Vision 2020.

Shultz, who served under the Reagan administration, said 2020 is a "very, very important notion".

"We can learn from that -- knowing where to go," he said as he introduced the Prime Minister to some 200 American and Malaysian businessmen who attended the one-day "Malaysia-U.S. Business and Technology Partnership" organised by the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (Asli) and the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) Malaysia.

"You're the leader. You're the one who puts ideas in place and gives operational meaning to those ideas. In the end that's what matters to people," he said.

Shultz recalled the warmth and hospitality of the Malaysian people when he last visited Kuala Lumpur as then Treasury Secretary to attend an Asian Development Bank meeting.

"I've seen with my own eyes what's happening," he said and was amazed with the transformation taking place in the country.

Shultz told Dr Mahathir not to be overly worried by incessant talk about protectionist barriers in the U.S.. Presidential candidates like Pat Buchanan who ran on that platform rarely "got nowhere," he said.

At a briefing for reporters after his speech, the Prime Minister said executives of high technology Japanese whom he met in Tokyo appeared keen to participate in Malaysia's exciting communications project called the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) that would incorporate the best ideas from Japan and the United States.

Dr Mahathir arrived here from Japan on Saturday to address two business conferences, meet American and other CEOs in San Francisco and Washington DC.

He said Japanese companies saw the MSC as an opportunity to invest and sell computer hardware and software. He was not able to gauge American interest to the idea as yet because "I've had limited contacts with them" due to time constraint.

While here, Dr Mahathir visited Sun Microsystems' corporate headquarters where he was given a demonstration of the company's most recent audio, video and animation technology it calls "Java".

Sun Microsystems seemed keen on the MSC project and was seeking a role in developing Malaysia's Silicon Valley, he added. -- BERNAMA

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