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Be grateful for our progress, says Anwar

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Reminding the people to be grateful of the progress achieved, acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today said sustaining success is more difficult than creating it.

It is the duty of everybody to preserve the country's strong points and to pass them down to future generations.

"We must realise that in the globalisation era, the challenges ahead require us to be stronger to preserve progress that we have achieved."

In his speech pledging allegiance and loyalty to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong in conjunction with the King's 75th birthday, Anwar said: "The Government's pragmatic ways have not only helped in accelerating development but also in ensuring that the well-being of the people is protected."

Reiterating the Government's principle of social justice and the democratisation of the economy, he said efforts to realise these aims would be intensified to encompass every village and community, including the less fortunate, women and children.

"Everybody regardless of their religion, race and culture, should enjoy the fruits of our development. Our progress will be lopsided if there are segments of society who have not benefited from development."

The Government would also enhance measures to produce more entrepreneurs especially among the Bumiputeras, with the focus on middle class entrepreneurs and businesswomen. Anwar said Vision 2020 outlined the Government's aspiration of seeing the country attaining progress in all aspects.

Besides economic and technological advancement, priority was also given to the development of spiritual and social values.

"We want to achieve development according to our own specifications. We want to have a better life but at the same time not neglect religion, moral and cultural virtues which form the pillars of our strength."

He said the people must be resilient and strong in combating social ills.

On the international front, Anwar said Malaysia continued to receive recognition as demonstrated by the various awards bestowed upon Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Touching on the needs for the country to prepare itself in the face of advancement in communications and information technology, Anwar said as the world became borderless, no country could stem the flow of information received by its people anymore.

"To ensure that we do not continue as recipients of technology, the Government has embarked on the Multimedia Super Corridor project which has so far received overwhelming response from giants in the industry."

Although initially some quarters had expressed reservations about the project, Anwar said, many were now convinced of its success.

Palestine ambassador Ahmad Al-Farra, who read the congratulatory message on behalf of the diplomatic corps, said the dedication and determination of the Malaysian Government and its people had resulted in sustained growth of the economy, and one blessed with political stability as well.

He said as Malaysia geared towards realising Vision 2020, the country has embarked on a momentous plan to bring to fruition the Multimedia Super Corridor.

"Malaysia has a proven track of its potentials and capabilities and we

are confident that the Government will be able to realise this project as well.

"This will be a major contribution to a knowledge-driven new world."

Acknowledging Malaysia's international relations and foreign policy which was premised on justice and cooperation, Al-Farra said this had resulted in her effective participation in global peacekeeping operations, in fostering South-South co-operation and Islamic solidarity as well in promoting international peace and stability.

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