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Mahathir-leaders

LEADERS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO SERVE LONGER, SAYS PM

From Zainoor Sulaiman

OKAYAMA, Japan July 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said elected leaders should be given time to implement their policies for the benefit of the country.

He said frequent changes in governments would not bring any result or benefit to the people.

"One should not look at the office as a prize," he said in an open dialogue with Okayama governor Nasahiro Ishii and the Prefecture Business Cooperation Committee chairman Katsumi Sasaki, here today.

The Prime Minister said he had to renew contacts and build relationship every time a country chose a new leader to head the government.

One country had 60 prime ministers in 50 years, he said.

He said Japan was fortunate that despite frequent changes of prime ministers, there was no change in policy as they came from the same party.

During the dialogue, Dr Mahathir was asked on a wide range of issues from international relations, Look-East policy, trade and the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

On trade and investment, Dr Mahathir invited more Japanese businesses from Okayama to invest in Malaysia particularly in the less labour high-technology industries.

He also invited investors from Okayama, which is developing its Information Technology zone, to set up their information related industries in the MSC.

The MSC covers a 15 by 40 kilometres area stretching from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) in the Malaysian capital to the new administrative capital in Putrajaya and the Kuala Lumpur International Airport at Sepang.

On the Look-East Policy, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia would continue to learn from Japanese experience and successes.

Malaysia would continue to send more students, now numbering 2,000, to further their education in Japan.

In view of the high cost of education here, he proposed that Japanese universities open their branch campuses in Malaysia. -- BERNAMA

ZS ABG