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Create a vision for the future, Dr Mahathir tells corporate leaders

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Urging the Malaysian business community to discard negative thinking in an effort to speed up economic recovery, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today they should establish a vision for themselves for the next decade or two.

"Having a clear vision is important as it provides a roadmap of the route to take in the future.

"Sadly, in business, few of our business leaders or corporations have a vision of where they want to be in 10 or 20 years," the Prime Minister said.

He was speaking at the launching of the Malaysia-British Business Council at Carcosa Seri Negara.

The council groups prominent businessmen from both Malaysia and Britain with an aim of increasing trade and improving business partnerships between the private sectors of both countries.

The council will be co-chaired by the president of the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute Mirzan Mahathir and chairman of Standard Chartered Bank Plc Patrick Gillam.

Among the Malaysian members of the council are chairman of Antah Holdings Bhd Tunku Imran Tuanku Ja'afar, group managing director of YTL Corporation Bhd Tan Sri Francis Yeoh, chairman of Mahkota Technology Sdn Bhd Tan Sri A.P. Arumugam and chief executive officer of Asli Datuk Michael Yeoh.

The council will actively promote two-way investments in both countries and serve as a contact point for their respective business communities to channel or seek business interests bilaterally.

Dr Mahathir said short-term and negative thinking would not help the country get out of the current economic difficulties.

"Our business community must be able to conceptualise and articulate a clear vision of where they want to go.

"Merely depending on government hand-outs is not the way to succeed ... Neither is blaming the Government.

"It can be so easy to be negative, and to apportion blame. It is so much more difficult to right wrongs, to build and create."

To bring the nation to greater heights, Dr Mahathir said smart partnerships between the Government, business, employees and foreign friends must be developed.

"With close co-operation, a clear vision and proactive strategies, we can emerge again to be a regional economic powerhouse. It will be difficult, it will take time but we will triumph finally," he said.

On Malaysia-Britain relations, Dr Mahathir said past unpleasant memories should be left as bygones.

"We are no longer interested in carrying our colonial baggage of historical injustices. Let us let bygones be bygones.

"More importantly, we should look to the future, to what we can do together to create a better future for our respective countries and people," he said.

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