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We must accept reality of global village, says Musa

BANGI, Sat. - Malaysia should be an attractive place for foreign investors looking for political stability, social harmony and administrative practices which meet international standards.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Musa Hitam said foreign businesses would look elsewhere if they could not be sure that their investments would be safe.

He said Malaysia should never allow itself to be known as a nation that practised rampant corruption, crony capitalism and nepotism.

"We should not allow the nation to be known as a cruel or oppressive country that does not give a place to anyone who dares to criticise the Government.

"Do not be a nation that does not accept transparency and accountability."

He said as a member of the global village Malaysia had to accept that "whether we like it or not, Malaysia needs trade and investment as an essential part of our development."

"This will require an administrative style, political and economic systems that meet international standards and are acceptable to Malaysians," he said.

Musa was speaking at a public lecture entitled "Malaysia in the Globalisation Era - a former Deputy Prime Minister's viewpoint" organised by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Speakers Club and Administrative and Professional Staff Association.

Speaking to reporters, Musa said once countries in Southeast Asia recovered from the economic downturn, they would be able to assert themselves in the world arena.

He said countries in the region could even provide a system of checks and balances in the increasingly unipolar world dominated by the United States as the only major superpower.

"What the US wants it expects to get, irrespective of the morality or what the rest of the world thinks. It will act if it serves its national interests.

"I worry over the fact that so many countries in Southeast Asia tend to be more inward looking as they are pre-occupied with trying to put their houses in order. They have to wake up and accept the reality of globalisation."

Earlier, responding to a question, Musa said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would remain relevant as Prime Minister for as long as Umno members wanted him to lead the party.

He said Dr Mahathir, as the leader of the largest party in Parliament, was chosen to be Prime Minister under the present political system practised in the country, which was still Umno-centric and Malay-centric.

Musa was replying to a question from Baharuddin Masron who claimed to be from the Social Justice Movement (Adil) after his talk.

However, he said, there was no such thing as a person remaining a leader for life or that he was always right and was a perfect man.

To another question, Musa said the political situation in the country could become worse if the ruling party stressed "loyalty to personalities" above service to the community.

He said the implications of "loyalty" above everything else could result in politicians who only sought to prove their loyalty in the hopes of

getting material benefits or being promoted.

"Power for the benefit of those in power, not for the benefit of the community is the new political mentality among Malays."

"If Umno political culture was changed back towards service orientation rather than loyalty orientation, God willing the party will achieve success and will continue to remain in power."

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