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Don't lose your ideals, PM advises youths

KUANTAN, Mon. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged youths not to lose sight of their ideals, reminding them that the country would remain stagnant if the younger generation was no longer motivated.

The Prime Minister said youths must work hard to achieve their ideals although there was no guarantee that they would succeed.

Otherwise society would turn lifeless and become one that did not have the courage to carry out changes, he said.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the opening of the National Youths' Day celebrations at Kompleks Sukpa in Bandar Indera Mahkota here.

"Devoid of ideals, we will not progress, so youths must not abandon their dreams and aspirations although many of them will not materialise now.

"Youths with the zeal for perfection are important ingredients for the country to develop further.

"Remember, all can be done if we are ambitious."

Among those present were Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein; Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob; Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak; and Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

Addressing an audience comprising mostly youths, the Prime Minister said when they were older and given responsibility like administering the country, they would then have the chance to realise their ideals.

"God willing, when you are older and continue to implement your ideals, the country will progress," he said.

But the Prime Minister gave the advice that in achieving perfection, knowledge and skills had to be acquired.

"In this modern era, there is so much knowledge that it would be impossible for one to master everything.

"One has to specialise," he said, adding that this would benefit society as a whole.

Dr Mahathir reminded the youths that one day they would become elderly people, just like the present older generation who, like themselves, had once enjoyed youth.

"Therefore, there always exists a generation gap between the old and the young with differences that are difficult to reconcile.

"The younger generation with their idealism and the older generation with their pragmatism.

"But believe me, when you are older and running the country, you will find an opposing younger generation with their own ideals."

Dr Mahathir said he felt it was important for the younger generation to realise that there were limits to their ideals, and obstacles that would stop them from achieving those aspirations.

"When you are given some responsibility one day, you will realise that it is not that easy to accomplish things that you always hold in esteem."

To drive home his point, the Prime Minister revealed the views he had held dear when he was young, which were at odds with those espoused by the older generation.

"While we were all fired up for independence, there were those among the older generation who felt the British were superior and could not be defeated.

"They said the people were not ready yet as "we could not even make

needles - what more warships."

The Prime Minister also reminded youths that ideals and knowledge would be meaningless if not complemented by values.

"Knowledge acquired by a person will be misused if there are no values.

"For example, someone taught about weapons will use them to rob and kill people if values are not inculcated in them."

Dr Mahathir also presented prizes to 12 recipients of the Anugerah Belia Negara.

They were Khaidir Jamal for leadership, Alzaid Shamsuddin (voluntary and community services), Musaini Omar (innovation and creativity), Nazaruddin Md Said (skills), Mohd Fitri Mat Arif (entrepreneurship) and Kamarulrahzan Salleh (youth/overseas student).

Others were Albakri Alias (art and culture), Serdang Jaya Youth Association (association), Tractors Malaysia (private company), Universiti Putra Malaysia (government agency) and Prof Madya Dr Asiah Sarji for Tokoh Belia Wanita and Datuk Abd Rashid Abd Rahman for Tokoh Belia Lelaki.

The Prime Minister also presented replica house keys to five poor families.

The homes were built by participants attending a youth camp held in conjunction with the celebrations.

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