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PM urges youth to be ready to develop country

PUTRAJAYA, Wed. - Malaysian youth must make preparations to shoulder the burden of developing the country, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the younger generation must also realise that it is their primary responsibility to protect the country from the negative effects of globalisation.

"This is our nation, so it is our responsibility to protect and defend it," Dr Mahathir told a crowd of 3,500 Umno Youth members gathered at a thanksgiving rally in conjunction with the Merdeka Day anniversary celebration tomorrow.

The event was held at Dataran Putra, located next to the Prime Minister's Office, here.

The Prime Minister said the gathering, held at a newly built venue, was testament to Malaysia's success in developing the country.

He said the Putrajaya Government complex was not built for the current generation of leaders.

"Putrajaya was built for you, the youth," the Prime Minister said.

He said efforts to develop the country must be continuously enhanced.

"Even though we are a small country, we see many even smaller ones capable of becoming developed countries."

Dr Mahathir said there was no reason why Malaysia could not take its place among the ranks of developed nations upon achieving the objectives of Vision 2020.

However, he said this could not be achieved by mere sloganeering.

"This also means that the next generation cannot be complacent, careless or dependent on others to develop our country," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that the country could not be developed if the younger generation resorted to violence, as it would damage the nation's reputation.

He instead urged youth to display a high degree of discipline and to act in a planned manner.

The Prime Minister thus urged the younger generation to pledge allegiance to race, religion and country, and not allow themselves to be subjugated by anyone.

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