

Leaders need enough time to be effective, says Dr M

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — To run a country well, a leader must be given time, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said if a country keeps changing its leader, the people will not be able to see the results of his policies.

"A leader needs a little bit more than two years to run a country.

"When I became the prime minister, it took me two years merely to learn, another two years to try to work things out and nearly 10 years to see the result of my work," he said when responding to a question from a participant of a dialogue during the 10th World Economic

Development Congress. Mahathir said if a country changes the prime minister every two years and each one of them wants to change every policy made by his predecessor, the people will not see any progress at all.

"You are going to see turmoil continuously.

"While I agree some countries need to have a president for only one term, I think I am satisfied enough," he said.

To another question, Mahathir said he has seen a lot during his 20 years as a prime minister.

"I have seen quite a lot of countries go up and down, get destroyed and not make a comeback at

all," he said.

"I have seen all kinds of politicians and various kinds of theories and theologies and I have been able to evaluate some of them."

Relating to the economic downturn after 1997, Mahathir said the government decided not to accept somebody else's solutions.

"That is why we tightened our belt and worked our way around it.

"We have managed to come out of the turmoil.

"So, 20 years is a good time to be a prime minister.

"I don't think others would have that chance but I am glad that I have that chance," he said.