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Mahathir-Globalisation

GLOBALISATION MUST SERVE MANKIND, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight globalisation must serve mankind and not the other way round.

The prime Minister stressed on the need for globalisation to be regulated and carefully planned so that it would benefit everyone from every part of the globe.

"Globalisation must be planned and planned carefully. The planning must involve everyone from every part of the globe.

"It must be for the good of everyone and it must be proven to be good for everyone. It must be implemented slowly, with the biggest effort directed at the least developed parts of the world," he said when opening the International Consultation on Globalisation at a hotel here.

Dr Mahathir also emphasised on the need to retain market principles like making profits, but profiteering, the exploitation of the poor and the gullible by the rich and the smart should be punishable by the international community.

He said there should be free movement of capital and labour but not to the detriment of the countries involved and at the same time the world's productivity must be increased and disparities of all kinds minimised.

Dr Mahathir suggested that a free flow of human capital be allowed under globalisation, where countries with excess workers be permitted to export them to countries which experience shortage of labour and plague with high labour costs.

"The productivity of the world will certainly improve. And this should be good for globalisation.

"I don't think we can do all these in our life time or even in two life times. But we should begin, and we should begin by thinking about it, thinking about globalisation as sharing of the wealth of the world in raw material, capital, labour and technology, a sharing that is not equal but fair.

"This is globalisation in the service of mankind. Globalisation must serve us and not we human kind serve globalisation," he said.

Globalisation must involve the whole world but when people talk about globalisation they think only of those countries with developed or developing markets.

Dr Mahathir said: "We think of opening up existing markets. We think of maximising our profits. But we are really not thinking about the world, about the globe which encompasses the familiar and the unfamiliar and inaccessible areas."

There was also a need for time to effect the changes required by globalisation as change destabilised and rapid change destabilises most of all, he said.

He said: "Those who are ready, those who are rich should change first. The others can follow according to their capacities, pausing to make correction, learning from those who had changed earlier, adjusting and consolidating."

Dr Mahathir also said the world today was very rich due to a combination of natural resources and technologies that mankind had developed, and there was no reason in a "caring world" that anyone should be poor.

Africa, Central Asia, South America and South Pacific could be easily enriched by investing the huge surplus of capital in developmental and

productive capacities, he said.

He said: "If the world is to be a global entity, then there should not be abject poverty in some parts and obscene wealth in other parts. All must be reasonably well off. Capital combined with modern technology have the capacity to enrich the whole globe.

"We can invest in a powerful railway system to carry the raw materials and imports of Central Asia at low cost. We can develop the great rivers of Latin America, Africa and Asia into the kind of transportation channels that the Rhine and the Danube are to Europe," said Dr Mahathir.

He also said people could do a whole lot of things that could lend true meaning to globalisation like transporting excess fresh water from melting snow to the arid deserts of the world in the same way that oil and gas being piped over thousands of miles.

-- BERNAMA

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