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Mahathir-Educators

KNOWLEDGE AND NOBLE VALUES VITAL FOR A PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY, SAYS PM

GENTING HIGHLANDS, April 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that knowledge without noble values may not be able to bring about a progressive society.

On the other hand, he said, noble values without knowledge would also not be able to produce the same result.

"It is true that parents are also responsible in inculcating noble values but parents may not be trained, whether in terms of values to be adopted or the effective ways in instilling them," he said when opening the national premier education convention 2001 at the Aminuddin Baki Institute here.

As such, he said, educators were responsible in ensuring the development of a new generation which was knowledgeable and with characteristics more adaptable to success.

The prime minister said that if a certain community lacks such a culture, the development of a more adaptable culture should be duly initiated through the prior training and promotion of noble values among educators.

"Once the educators have subscribed to this new culture and trained specifically to instil them among their pupils and students, then the process of developing a new culture more adaptable to progress can be carried out more effectively by the educators," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the difference in the pace of progress of the communities of the world was due to their values or culture practised by them.

"Abundance of natural resources, conducive climate, geographical factors and others have no effect on culture...that is why in the same country, different races with different cultures achieve varying degree of success," he said.

The prime minister said that in Malaysia, the cultures of the Malays and the Chinese were very different whereby the Chinese community places great emphasis on the acquiring of knowledge and not much so by the Malays.

Dr Mahathir also expressed regret over the poor performance of Malay students in universities as they were seen to be concentrating more of their time and energy on other activities and not on their studies.

"This statement may cause anger among certain quarters but it is this difference in the cultures of the Chinese and the Malays which makes it difficult to achieve the objectives of the New Economic Policy," he said.

"If we were to balance the performance of the races in Malaysia, values and culture hindering the achievement of progress should be discarded.

"In Malaysia, we know that if we wish for the success of the Malays to be not par with the other races in the world, then changes in values and culture must be initiated among the younger Malays.

"They should be guided by the true Islamic values, not values indiscriminately inculcated by those with other motives," he said.

The prime minister said that it was most essential that educators were trained in instilling such values and culture among their students.

Dr Mahathir said that when the Vision 2020 was first announced, "we were still in the industrial era but today we are faced with a new paradigm, that is a developed country needs to acquire technology and also information.

"The Vision 2020 we indicated in 1991 is not the same as Vision 2020 we

are outlining today...it may change again in 20 years before the year 2020," he said.

The prime minister said that Vision 2020 largely depended on the quality of the people based on their education.

"Muslims have missed out on the Industrial Revolution, let not the Malays in Malaysia deliberately miss the opportunity from the Information Revolution. Should we miss out again this time, we may not be able to catch up with progress," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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