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Malays must face challenges of globalisation

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malays will have to face the challenges of globalisation and the k-economy on their own as the Government will only be able to protect them to a certain extent.

The inaugural Malay Education Congress organising chairman Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said the Government could continue to give licences, subsidies, shares and projects to the Malays but this would not guarantee success if they were not prepared to face these challenges.

"Education is the key to our future. If we are weak in education, then we will face a bleak future.

"We will be weak in economy, we will be weak in politics and we will be weak in protecting Islam which we love very much," he said at the opening of the congress at the Putra World Trade Centre today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad opened the congress.

Tengku Razaleigh described data collected on the performance of Malay students in education as "frightening".

"It seems that 44 years of independence is insufficient for us to be on par with other races," he said adding that acquiring knowledge and skills was the true essence of independence. He said the question that needs to be answered was why Malays still lagged behind the other communities.

"Is it that aid for Malay pupils is not enough? Are our methods and co-curriculum weak? Are there other ways for our children to master English, Maths and Science.

"Is it our culture that makes us weak? Or is it that the Malay race must be forever pampered," he asked.

He said the idea to organise the congress was mooted by those concerned over the problems faced by Malay students in education.

"Discussions to hold this congress began even before talks on implementing meritocracy in our education system began. We hope to come up with resolutions which we would try to undertake ourselves."

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