

17 MAR 2001

Mahathir-Caring

PEOPLE SHOULD BE MORE CARING, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, March 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has urged the people, especially those who are better-off, to be more caring towards the less fortunate members of society.

He said the people irrespective of their status owed a debt of gratitude to society.

"Whether students, officers or the Prime Minister, we will not get our post or position without society. Society can determine our position," he said at a dinner organised by Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) Asas Strategi Komunikasi student body here tonight.

Dr Mahathir said giving donations to and showing sympathy for the less fortunate would help to promote a caring and harmonious society.

Although people like corporate figures paid taxes, their contributions would be limited to this and would not directly help to strengthen ties with other members of society, he said.

He said the government's role was also restricted by its limited financial resources and this was where members of society could do their bit.

"Sometimes we read in the newspapers about people needing money for surgery...many people are willing to donate, not only to meet the needs in the country but also for less fortunate groups outside the country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was important to instil in the younger generation the habit of giving donations and doing other charitable acts to help overcome problems faced by society.

He commended the UPM students for taking the initiative to finance the function and to set up a welfare fund.

"I am confident that if this project is continued, the donations raised can be used in aid of education, surgery and other purposes," he said.

"Sometimes the need arises suddenly and unexpectedly. Hopefully we can seek help from funds like this and if it is managed well, its objective will be met," he said.

Dr Mahathir hoped that more students from institutions of higher learning would get involved in welfare work and use such activities to train themselves to give something back to society.

The money collected at the dinner was given to the Kuala Lumpur Hospital Welfare Fund.

-- BERNAMA

AR AR YBY