

13 NOV 2001

Mahathir-Teachers

PM WANTS TEACHERS TO SHAPE CHILDREN'S CHARACTER TO ATTAIN SUCCESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he places high hopes on teachers to instil values like diligence among children as this will determine the future success of a race.

He said that even though it was the responsibility of parents to look after their children, teachers with their training including in child psychology had a vital role in educating them and shaping their character.

"The role of teachers is very important not only in imparting knowledge but also in character development to ensure the success of the race and the nation," he said at the Excellent Teachers' Premier Convention 2001 here.

Dr Mahathir said that a backward race could one day become successful as a result of diligence, determination and resilience.

According to him, this had been proven when the Malays were now able to produce leaders, among them in the medical, engineering, information technology and education fields.

At the same time, Dr Mahathir expressed regret over incidents like a son murdering his father and a father raping his own daughter as frequently reported in the newspapers lately.

"These are examples of erosion of our values especially as Muslims who should necessarily uphold and adopt values based on the Quran and hadis," he said.

However, he was confident that if the community were to revert to upholding values and adopting the culture of placing priority on education, developing the reading habit, prepared to work hard and rid themselves of complacency, the race would progress.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysians were now able to better others including from the West where there was moral decay and tendency towards seeking the easy way out.

Instead, he said, Malaysians would emerge as a respected race if they were prepared to persevere in pursuit of success.

Dr Mahathir also said that Malaysians should be proud that Malaysia was only among a few countries which dare to criticise the world's big powers.

"How could we do it...because we have learnt how to manage our own country so that we do not owe anybody anything and as such nobody could twist our arms," he said.

With the country's ability also, he said, nobody could force Malaysia to change its position or loans would be withheld against the country.

So far, he said, Malaysia had succeeded through its own capabilities but much more needed to be done.

"Our struggles are not over yet," he said.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysians should strive harder to become not a world power but at least a country not easily discriminated against and undermined.

-- BERNAMA

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