

Strive for development'

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PM: Malaysia must reach developed status by 2020 to uphold its self-respect

SERDANG, Wed: Malaysia aspires to be a developed country by 2020 so that it can uphold its "self-respect" and protect the country and its religion, but not to practise injustice to anyone, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Malaysia wants to be developed like the European countries, the United States and Japan, as we believe that we will gain a lot of benefits from being a developed country," he said when addressing 10,000 students and staff of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) at the campus here.

Mahathir said being a developed country, Malaysia will not be looked down upon by other parties.

He said therefore, students who are the future generation must ensure that the present peaceful situation in the country that will be handed over to them one day will remain calm and will be developed by 2020.

He reminded bumiputras that they will not enjoy the full benefits derived by the country if bumiputra students fail to master knowledge.

It was crucial for bumiputras to master knowledge fully because in the globalisation era, foreign powers would attempt to weaken the country, he said.

"The future generation who will receive this country will have a huge responsibility and so they have to prepare themselves with the right attitude and knowledge to ensure Malaysia will continue to develop."

Mahathir said in the world today, whoever has the power

will be considered as right, although what the person does is wrong.

"As long as we are weak, we will have to accept ourselves as being a person who is always wrong. Those who are strong will still be considered right al-

though what he is doing is against universal values."

Mahathir also gave his assurance that UPM's name will not be changed back to its original name of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia.

Later, at a press conference,

when asked whether he will be meeting President George W. Bush during his visit to the United States next month, Mahathir replied: "I suppose if I happen to meet him, then I meet him . . . because he is going to be at the same place."

He also confirmed a newspaper report that Pulau Tioman will be made a duty-free island.

The report stated that the island will be given the status to attract tourists from neighbouring countries, especially Singapore.