

PM: Changes may not help

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JOHOR BARU: Changes in the government, especially if they are meant to oust leaders, may not necessarily be good as history has proven that such happenings in some countries had actually worsened the situation, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

What many had assumed would have made a better government had turned out to be worse as the leaders were not chosen for their ability but because they managed to gain popularity, the Prime Minister said.

"In Malaysia, there were efforts to topple the leadership by claiming the leader is a bad man without really knowing the bad things that he had done.

"The man was labelled *Firaun* or *Mahafiraun* this is probably the *Firaun* talking today," he said, referring to himself whom the Opposition had once labelled as that.

Instigating anger and hatred among the people by some quarters could cloud one's judgment and lead to "irreparable damage to one's ability to differentiate right from wrong," he said when addressing about 2,000 students and staff of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia during his day-long visit to Johor yesterday.

He said it was the responsibility of the government of the day to nurture the nation's future leaders.

"We have to ensure the future generation which will take over the country will be able to maintain and continue the success we have attained," he said.

Dr Mahathir stressed that gaining independence did not guarantee prosperity as many independent nations had failed to ensure economic and social stability.

To avoid an independent country from being re-colonised, he said that people must be united.

"Colonisation today does not necessarily come in the form of a war or conquering of a nation as this could be done through economic controls in the name of globalisation," he added.

Earlier, while attending a student leaders' patriotic gath-

ering at Pasir Gudang stadium, the Prime Minister called on the younger generation to appreciate racial harmony and religious tolerance, which had been the recipe for Malaysia to prosper since independence.

"We must learn to set aside our differences and use similarities to bring together all races to work as one," he said.

He reiterated the importance

for the post-independence generation to appreciate the freedom their forefathers had fought for and avoid mistakes made in the past.

He said the 450 years of colonisation was a result of disunity, illiteracy and poverty, adding that in today's context, unity would have to take the bigger scope of all races working together.