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Mahathir-Skills

SEEK KNOWLEDGE TO BE ON PAR WITH NON-BUMIS, DR MAHATHIR TELLS
BUMIPUTERAS

BANGI, Sept 10 (Bernama) -- The bumiputeras must be efficient and willing to seek knowledge and skills to close the gap between them and the non-bumiputeras, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"Our problem is that not many buimputeras are interested in mastering (certain) skills that will enable them to help develop their community to be on par with the other races," the prime minister said when opening the Malaysia-France Institute, here.

He said the bumiputera community now was not inferior in any way and that so long as they were willing to learn something and do it repeatedly, they could master those skills.

He said the government wanted to see the country developed and its people knowing how to use the development.

"Many bumiputeras may not be able to enjoy a better life in a developed country because they don't possess the know-how.

"For this, the government is prepared to spend a lot of money and have training centres but training centres alone are not enough if there is no interest among the bumiputeras to enjoy the facilities provided by development," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that to close the gap between the bumiputeras and the non-bumiputeras, the government had set up Mara whose function was to develop the buimputeras.

He said that just after the country gained independence, the government had found the gap between the bumiputeras and non-bumiputeras in terms of skills and ability to be very glaring.

This gap had caused the bumiputeras to assume that certain tasks like those requiring mechanical or technical skills could only be performed by the non-bumiputeras and that the bumiputeras were incapable of mastering such skills, he said.

"This is a wrong perception because anyone can become efficient if he is given the training and is required to something repeatedly," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that when the government saw this disparity among the races, it looked for ways to balance the situation by giving training and ensuring that trainees performed a task repeatedly until they mastered the skill.

He said that to acquire the knowledge or skill, the country was prepared to seek the assistance of other countries as this was the only way to ensure progress.

-- BERNAMA

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