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Mahathir-Knowledge

BUMIPUTRAS NEED TO MASTER KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP, SAYS DR M

SERDANG, Jan 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded the Bumiputeras that they will not enjoy the full benefits derived by the country which plans to achieve the developed nation status in 2020 if Bumiputera students fail to master the various knowledge.

He said it was crucial for Bumiputera students to master knowledge fully because in the globalisation era, foreign powers would attempt to weaken the country.

Dr Mahathir said if Bumiputera students did not give enough attention to master the various knowledge, they would become less efficient citizens and would be less able to develop the country.

"This is certainly most unfortunate. For the Bumiputera students, the burden and responsibility of mastering knowledge is greater than the non-Bumiputeras," he said when speaking in front of more than 5,000 students and staff of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) at a gathering here.

Dr Mahathir said that in a multi-racial country like Malaysia, if the Bumiputera students failed to acquire knowledge properly, they would become a backward society and this would not contribute towards national peace and harmony.

The prime minister said Bumiputera students, particularly those in institutions of higher learning (IPT), should acquire knowledge seriously by putting aside their political interests until they completed their studies.

"Acquire knowledge and high qualification before taking part in other fields. With knowledge and high qualification, our participation in the other fields will be more meaningful," he said.

In fact, said Dr Mahathir, mastering of knowledge was part of the religious obligation for Muslims.

"So, don't neglect knowledge which contributes to the wellbeing of Muslims so that they will not be humiliated like what is happening now," he said.

The prime minister said he need not give the same advice to the non-Bumiputeras because they gave attention to the mastering of the knowledge.

He said students who were interested in politics could indulge in it after completing their studies and using their own money because the government spent much money to pay for the students' education.

"Politics will always be there in the country...(so you can be patient)," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was convinced that the Malays were as capable as the other races in the country.

He also said the task of the present generation was to ensure that the situation in the country was good, peaceful and developed when it was handed down to the next generation.

The prime minister said when the country gained independence, it did not have even a single university, but there were now 14 public universities and many more private institutions of higher learning and this development was achieved through our own efforts.

"We have developed faster than other countries which achieved their independence at the same time as we did," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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