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Mahathir-Engineers

MALAYSIANS NEED TO COME UP WITH A NEW IDEAS, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 9 (Bernama) -- Malaysians, especially engineers and scientists, need to come up with new ideas, theories and skills to ensure that the country would progress without just following "other people's footprints", said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

If Malaysians were afraid to try new things, they would be "stuck in the mud" and end up following others, said the prime minister.

"If you believe in the spirit of Malaysia Boleh, I am quite sure in the end, we will succeed," he said at the 30th anniversary dinner of the Board of Engineers.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should not be too orthodox, too ordinary and too tied up to do things in conventional ways.

Engineers, for instance, need to do things differently since they were many things that could be done differently, he said.

He said that in coming up with new and crazy ideas, Malaysian also should be prepared to accept failures in the process.

"If we are prepared to take the risk, we are able to achieve it (success) because it is all within our capabilities," he said.

"Many ideas in Malaysia may seem ridiculous and impossible but we have proven to people Malaysia can think out new ideas and make it work.

"In Malaysia, we have do things different from others. For example, after independence, other countries decided to nationalise all the foreign holdings in the country and keep their market closed while we did the other way round by inviting foreign investors to participate in our economy and this helped the country to progress," he said.

Dr Mahathir said in solving the financial crisis that started in 1997, Malaysia did its own way and did not copy others.

"We do things contrary to expectations," he said.

The prime minister called on engineers to fully use the latest technology, especially the wireless technology, in constructing tall buildings and in other fields.

Despite the achievements by local engineers, Dr Mahathir said they should "get out of their cocoon" and sometimes let themselves float rather than be rooted to the ground so that they were able "to come up with ideas that could amend problems that help us lead a better life."

Dr Mahathir said local engineers had made tremendous progress from being an "untrusted group" in the pre-independence era -- when they only held technical assistants and technicians posts despite having qualifications and capabilities -- to a group that was able able to build complex engineering structures and export skills and expertise abroad.

At the function, Dr Mahathir also launched a book titled "Engineers in Nation Building" produced by the Board Of Engineers and Pos Malaysia's first day cover on BEM in conjunction with the board's anniversary.

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