

'Do it our way'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia must ensure that it keeps doing things its way to maintain the progress that it has achieved, says Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The prime minister said that it is his hope after retirement to see the people continue to live in comfort as a result of the nation's progress.

"We have succeeded in building a country that has given us a good life, that has given us pride, that is respected by everybody. We have done all these our way and we must always try and preserve this way of ours so that Malaysia will continue to develop and progress and its people will continue to live in comfort.

"This is the wish of all of us. This is also my wish when I step down from the political arena," Mahathir, who is retiring on Friday, said when opening the People's Progressive Party (PPP) general assembly (*see also page 2*).

He said Malaysia has done many things that were not done in other countries, like making every festive celebration a national celebration to strengthen unity, reports Bernama.

"It's our way of fostering ties among the communities, among the followers of different religions," he said.

Mahathir said that as a result of Malaysia's success, Malaysians are able to make a living abroad and at the same time be proud to be Malaysians.

"I was in Papua New Guinea (two days ago). There are 3,000 Malaysians in Papua New Guinea where previously there was none. They do business there, they are successful, they don't forget that they are from Malaysia.

"They are proud to be Malaysians, this is a new thing, pride in being a Malaysian wherever they may be," he said.

This, he said, is the result of Malaysia's success, which in turn stems from the ruling coalition's unselfishness in sharing its power.

He also reminded Malaysians to lead a noble life because high ability and knowledge alone cannot ensure success. Without a noble culture, the knowledgeable and the capable could abuse their skills for bad intentions, he said.

He also said he was puzzled that despite success, there are those who still oppose the government's efforts to foster unity, which was the cornerstone of this success.

He said efforts to get non-Malays to study in national schools to promote unity was initially misconceived as an attempt to sideline vernacular schools. The government's move to set up vision schools, which house the three types of schools under one roof, was also misconceived as an attempt to eradicate the mother tongue of the other communities, he said.

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