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Umno-Reaction (Economy)

DR M RESPONSIBLE FOR RESTORING IMAGE OF MALAYS, SAYS JAMALUDIN

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- The Malays should be grateful to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad because he has improved their well-being and restored their image in the economic field, Second Finance Minister Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis said today.

"Previously, the Malays were held in low regard and despised because they were deemed only fit to be fishermen, farmers and to live in the rural areas, as if they lacked capability. But the prime minister has restored the integrity of the Malays to be on par with foreign races, and now there are successful Malay companies," he said.

Commenting on Dr Mahathir's policy speech at the opening of the Umno General Assembly here, he said while the prime minister took pride in the Malays' achievements now, Dr Mahathir also expressed his concerns.

This was because the Malays were still too dependent on the government and government contracts, said Dr Jamaludin.

Dr Mahathir wanted more Malays to participate in the private sector and to continue to compete in the global arena because they had been in business since the Melaka Sultanate era, he said.

Express Rail Link Sdn Bhd (ERL) executive chairman Datuk Mohamed Nadzmi Salleh said more efforts were needed before Malaysians could join the league of rich and developed countries.

He said this when commenting on the attitude of Malaysians who were more demanding than their counterparts in developed countries, a situation highlighted by Dr Mahathir in his speech.

Malaysia had not yet attained developed status although it had made a lot of progress in the economic field, he said.

"With a per capita income of US\$4,000, we are still lagging far behind. Don't forget, the struggle is still not over," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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