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Mahathir-Citizens

MALAYSIA'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON ITS CITIZENS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Malaysia's success depends on its citizens and the colour of skin, racial heritage or natural resources are not the most important factors to determine its success.

"What determines success is the culture or the value system which is accepted and practised," the Prime Minister said when introducing the motion to table the mid-term review of the Eighth Malaysia Plan in the Dewan Rakyat here today.

He said in an increasingly interdependent world, Malaysia could not stand alone.

In an environment which is continuously changing, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia has no other choice other than to increase its competitiveness, strengthen its resilience and increase its productivity and creativity.

He said the private sector must venture into new markets and this requires a change in mindset from being comfortable with traditional markets and to one that regards the world as the market.

"We should make Malaysia the gateway for products and services from other parts of the world to the countries in this region.

"In competing for the global market, we have to ensure that our management practices are up to the highest standards and we must uncompromisingly benchmark ourselves against the world's best," he said.

Dr Mahathir called on Malaysians not to forget that national unity is the country's greatest asset.

"It is the only asset that makes it possible for us to enjoy the other assets that the Almighty has showered on this land in abundance.

"National unity in our multi-ethnic and multi-religious country can only be maintained and strengthened if there is a high level of understanding, tolerance and mutual respect amongst our diverse peoples," said Dr Mahathir in his last speech as Prime Minister in the Dewan Rakyat, before retiring from the post he has held for 22 years, tomorrow.

He reminded the people that many other multi-ethnic societies have failed as each race places its own interest first before the interest of the nation.

"We have to constantly and tirelessly work to strengthen national unity and take immediate action to curb tendencies that could work against the national interest.

"No one should have a narrow view point and accuse the Government of trying to destroy the culture and language of any race. In reality it is only in Malaysia that the interests of all races are safeguarded and financed by the Government," he said.

The Prime Minister called on the people to be prepared for any challenge that comes their way and the Government on its part will provide the leadership and the requisite resources.

He said the Government will conduct extensive consultations in formulating strategies to face new challenges as, or even before, they arise.

-- BERNAMA

MFJ MFJ ZUL