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Mahathir-Fellow

MAHATHIR MADE HONORARY FELLOW OF MARITIME INSTITUTE

PUTRAJAYA, March 20 (Bernama) -- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was tonight made an Honorary Fellow of the Malaysian Maritime Institute (IKMAL) in appreciation of his immense contribution to the maritime industry.

A dinner was held here attended by the Sultan Sharafuddin Idris of Selangor to mark the occasion.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said maritime activities were today so important that they could make or even break a nation.

He said he was proud that Malaysia, with more than 50 ports, was steadily moving towards becoming a maritime nation.

Dr Mahathir believed that a maritime professional body like IKMAL would be able to play a significant role in contributing its professional views on critical issues and working in close collaboration with other maritime organisations in Malaysia and overseas.

"In keeping with Malaysia's goal to become a developed nation by the year 2020, the maritime industry must also ensure that it reaches the same stage of development," he said.

With 50 ports, he said each could not avoid competing with the others to emerge as the most attractive.

Dr Mahathir said competition was good in order to improve efficiency but at times the ports should also consider cooperation so as not to duplicate the services and to make them more comprehensive.

"A division of labour must be considered so that investments in costly facilities are not wasted," he said.

He was also confident that local ports have the capacity to improve and compete with ports in neighbouring countries.

"We have the advantage of our own hinterland, adequate land for port supporting industries, manufacturing and processing, and generally our costs are lower.

"But we must develop port management to the highest degree of efficiency using the latest techniques," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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