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Liberal democracy is not the full answer, says Dr Mahathir

SHAH ALAM, Thurs. - Liberal democracy should not override the interests of the nation and people, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We've seen how liberal democracies have destroyed cultures, morals and religion in other countries.

"We need not legalise such destruction in the name of democracy.

"We should adopt what is good and discard the bad," Dr Mahathir said after receiving an honorary doctorate in Political Science and Government from Universiti Teknologi Mara here today.

Noting that Malaysian democracy was often criticised by western democracies, Dr Mahathir said some Malaysians were embarrassed by such criticisms.

Malaysians should realise that the democracy practised in Malaysia was for the good of the country and the people.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, who is UiTM Chancellor, conferred the doctorate at the university's Commemorative Convocation here today.

Also at the function were the Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah, Dr Mahathir's wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Higher Education Minister Datuk Dr Shafie Mohd Salleh, Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Aziz Samsuddin and Tourism Minister Datuk Leo Michael Toyad.

Dr Mahathir said people should differentiate between good and bad if they wished to enjoy prosperity.

"The recent smooth general election might have given an impression that democracy and politics was simple.

"In actual fact, it is not," he said.

Democracy, Dr Mahathir said, was a difficult system and vulnerable to corruption, chaos and anarchy.

"Murder and all sorts of crimes that occur in some developing countries that try to practise democracy is proof of how difficult and dangerous democracy can be."

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, after conferring the degree, described Dr Mahathir as an intellectual and a leader of great foresight.

"He had observed and valued UiTM's contributions and status as a leading university," he said.

"He is not only a very dedicated person but also a leader who practises noble values," Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin added.