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`Generosity of Malays boosted progress'

M.K. Megan; Farrah Naz Karim

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The willingness of Malays since Independence to share the country's wealth with other races has contributed to the country's development, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight.

The Prime Minister said because of the Malays' willingness to share, the other races too reciprocated by sharing their wealth and experience.

"If we (Malays) were greedy and got everything but didn't know how to develop it, nobody would have benefited," he said when addressing the Young Malays Secretariat dinner at the Putra World Trade Centre.

"It was because of the wisdom of Malays to share that we have achieved success. When I travel to other countries many people ask me how, despite the racial mix, Malaysia can remain peaceful. I tell them it is due to the generosity of Malays."

However, he said, he was not satisfied with the achievement of Malays, who were lagging behind other races.

He said Malays had not achieved the targeted equity ownership under the New Economic Policy because "we give shares, approve permits and contracts, but they sell them for quick returns".

He also said Malays should stop blaming the Government. "The Government provides assistance in every possible way, but they misuse it."

He said many Malays were involved in drug abuse, rape, incest and loitering. Many were infected with the HIV virus, he added.

Present at the function were Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Tenaga Nasional Bhd chairman Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin and MK Land Holdings executive chairman Tan Sri Mustapha Kamal Abu Bakar.

Earlier, guests were entertained to gamelan music and traditional dance performances.

A poem dedicated to Dr Mahathir was also recited. The gist of the poem, titled Young Men's Voice Meant for Our Beloved Leader, was about Malaysian history, struggle for independence, how Dr Mahathir steered Malaysia onto the path of a developed nation and the challenges that lay ahead.

The event was aimed at serving as a platform to bridge the gap between the younger generation and leaders.