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Dr M confident Malaysia will become developed nation under new leadership

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad expressed confidence that Malaysia will achieve developed nation status by 2020 under the new leadership led by Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Dr Mahathir said he has done enough for the country and it is time that Malaysia has a new leader.

"I am confident that the new leadership shares my aspirations. I hope civil servants will give full support to the new leadership and together develop our country into an industrialised nation by 2020 according to our own mould," he said at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti) annual dinner in Kuala Lumpur last night.

The Prime Minister and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali joined about 1,000 staff of the ministry at the "Miti Bersama Perdana Menteri". This year's dinner was a special tribute to Dr Mahathir, who will retire next month after leading the country for 22 years.

Also present at the dinner were International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Deputy Minister Datuk Seri Kerk Choo Ting, ministry parliamentary secretary Datuk Ho Cheong Sing, ministry secretary-general Datuk Abdul Razak Ramli and senior officials.

Dr Mahathir thanked Miti employees for their contributions to the country as they are in the forefront in enhancing trade and commerce.

"We need government employees who are dedicated and willing to meet challenges. Malaysia has a good administrative machinery, probably the best in the world."

Job satisfaction is more important than monetary rewards, he said.

Before his speech, those present were given an impromptu treat by Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah, who sang two songs.