

New Malay dilemma in defence of their race
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Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malays now face a dilemma in that they can no longer talk about their own race lest they be labeled racist.

He said this dilemma was not caused by other people but by the Malays themselves because they were incapable of defending themselves and often gave in or withdrew whenever a crisis occurred.

"We are in a dilemma. If we remain silent, it could be taken as accepting an opinion. But, if we respond, we may be accused of being racist. I am not racist. I am merely stating the truth. When we talk of our race, we acknowledge the race. We should be proud that we are Malays," he said.

Mahathir was delivering a keynote address at a symposium on 'The Malay Dilemma: Perspective and Conclusion' organised by the Persatuan Alumni Pemimpin Mahasiswa Aspirasi Malaysia (Aspirasi) at the Dewan Merdeka of the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

He said the attitude of giving in easily was a drawback for the Malays and, if they clung on to this value, it would eventually lead to erosion of their position in this country.

He said the Malays should adopt a higher quality of life by striving, pursuing knowledge and taking advantage of opportunities because only these elements would determine the progress or regress of a community.

"We are given opportunities, but do not take advantage of them. When I visit universities, I ask myself why there are so many female students. Where are the male students? Are they stupid or not taking advantage of the opportunity to build a better future for themselves?" he said.

Malays weak because they are divided

Mahathir said that if the Malays were wise enough to make best use of the opportunities made available by the New Economic Policy (NEP), they will attain not only 30 percent of the nation's wealth but much more than that.

He said the NEP had to be continued because the Malays had yet to attain the quota set, and the Malays should continue to strive to avert becoming the most backwardness race in the country.

"The government will safeguard our position, but there will come a day when it will not be able to defend national policies.

"This can happen because the Malays are obsessed with the majority they have, to the extent that they want to become the prime minister, to go to Putrajaya. If they are really keen on doing so, then go ahead!" he said.

He said some Malays were prepared to gamble away whatever they had to gain power and divide the Malays to the extent of rendering them weak.

On Malay supremacy, which had often been talked about of late, Mahathir said the Malays should strive and have 'halal' and adequate source of income to retain that concept.

"If you want to be the master, you have to equip yourself with knowledge and efficiency. Can we become the master when other people ask us to do work which is not that of a master? If you want to develop yourself, you must reject values unsuitable to present-day development," he said.

Mahathir reminded the Malays not to be too obsessed with earning a huge income though the country desired to be a high-income nation because it could drive them to corruption.

- Bernama

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