

**'1Malaysia concept enshrined in constitution'**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**October 3, 2010**

International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed yesterday explained to Malaysian students here, the objectives of 1Malaysia and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

Speaking at a seminar organised by the Kelab UMNO Australia Melbourne (KUAM) at his alma mater, University of Melbourne, he said 1Malaysia was "a principle which is enshrined in the constitution of Malaysia."



It was championed from the time of Malaysia's first prime minister Tengku Abdul Rahman who wanted all races to work together and respect one another, he added.

Mustapa (left) elaborated on the multi-dimensional aspect of 1Malaysia, noting that to achieve 1Malaysia, Malaysians must first understand the concept.

"There are many dimensions of 1Malaysia, one of which is to bring about greater integration between the various parts of the country.

"Another dimension would involve bringing the rural and urban parts of Malaysia closer to each other. (Yet) Another, would be reducing the income gap between the rich and the poor. Another would be providing better facilities to those in rural areas," he said.

Mustapa said the government would unveil "a detailed economic programme of action to transform Malaysia to be a fully developed country" during the official launch of the ETP on Oct 26.

The detailed economic programme of action will include "12 areas" identified by both the private sector and the government. Mustapa, however, did not elaborate on the nature of the 12 areas.

#### Open competition encouraged

Later, fielding questions from seminar participants, Mustapa spoke about a number of government initiatives and policies.

On government tenders and open competition, Mustapa said that "the policy of the current government is to encourage open competition. If someone were to get a tender through direct negotiation, that it's unfair."

Mustapa said only high-security projects involving the military and defence were exempted from open tender.

He said "open tender means more competition, greater transparency, no corruption. And that's what the public wants. And we are listening to the public."



The government is setting up a website to publish information on government tenders, including the names of tender winners.

Since 2007, KUAM has been organising human development seminars, bringing in prominent Malaysian figures, including former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (*left*) in 2008, to discuss Malaysian issues.

Dr Mahathir, 85, was scheduled to address the seminar again this year, but was indisposed Saturday, and requested Mustapa, who was in Melbourne after attending the Forbes Global CEOs Conference in Sydney, to address the seminar on his behalf.

- Bernama

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/144296>