

Malaysia needs to stay focused on transformation course, says Nor Mohamed
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 14 -- Malaysia needs to stay focused on the course of transformation because in today's rapidly changing and dynamic world a mere incremental change would result in the country being overtaken.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Nor Mohamed Yakcop, said an analogy would be a new football team starting out at division three (as in Third World country).

"Through fighting spirit, talent and hard work it climbed the ranks and reached the premiership level.

"The team needs to sustain being in the premiership level and aspire at least to rise to mid-level, knowing that football clubs above will do their best to stay there and those below are particularly impatient to be promoted to the premiership," he said in his keynote address at Economic Planning Unit (EPU) Retreat Programme here today.

Nor Mohamed said the second area of focus would be on building institutional excellence.

"To stay the course, we need enduring institutions of excellence.

"A defining feature, which separates developed countries from developing countries, is the role of institutes," he said.

He said many developing countries had individuals with calibre but without institutional support, the nation would not be able to optimise on its strength.

Nor Mohamed said the third focus was on nurturing, attracting and retaining the best of human capital to contribute and work in Malaysia.

"In today's flat world, physical factors of production are less of a factor for competitiveness," he said.

He said during the last 50 years, the government needed to have a pervasive presence in the economy to drive economic transformation and growth.

"However, the private sector has demonstrated its efficiency in capitalising on economic opportunities.

"Going forward, we need to facilitate an environment of market-based incentives to reward those who invest and are competitive," he said.

This, he said, included uplifting the livelihood of the bottom 40 per cent of households through income and capacity-building programmes, social safety net and addressing the needs of the disadvantage group.

He said the 10th Malaysia Plan would pay greater attention to the provision of amenities and rural infrastructure, formulating comprehensive social safety net programmes for

disadvantaged groups as well as the creation of programmes to address the needs of special target groups. (Bernama)

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