

DATE: 5 / 11 / 2009

Women will leave men by wayside, says Dr M

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PUTRAJAYA: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad sees the possibility of a power shift from men to women.

He said: "Women are better educated, and just as capable, if not more, than men. In the past, women were confined to the kitchen. Now, they've come out and done well, providing the intellectual output needed for nation-building."

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the 10th Perdana Discourse, themed "The Role of Women and Youth in National Development", at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here yesterday.

"Men have become dependent on women, while women are becoming more independent. Soon, women will dominate society and men will lose

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I TELL (ARAB WOMEN) THAT THE WOMEN HERE ARE NOT BARRED FROM ANYTHING. THEY CAN DO WHATEVER THEY WANT.

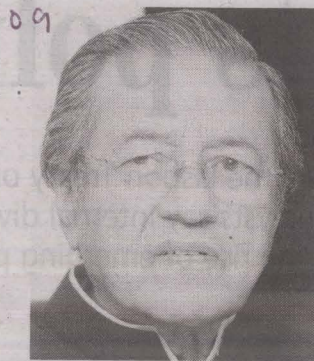
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— Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad
Former prime minister

the position of authority, and men will not be able to stop them. They are too lazy to stop them," he said, drawing laughter from the packed gallery.

Dr Mahathir beamed with pride as he recounted his experience of surprising Arab women with examples of the things women did in Malaysia.

"I tell them that the women here are not barred from any-



thing. They can do whatever they want.

"These Arab ladies were shocked when I told them that we have female jet-fighter pilots, too."

He called on women to aspire to become heads of department and ministry.

He urged the youths to focus their energy on acquiring knowledge and education, instead of taking part in street

demonstrations.

"When they study, they use taxpayers' money. And when they refuse to do that and take to the streets instead, then they are wasting it.

"That money could have been used to build a road in a kampung."

Reassuring youth that their time to take charge would come, he said: "I was once a youth, too, and I had ideals that the elders didn't believe in. I was not accepted as a leader then, so I took six years off politics to get my university education. When I came back, people listened to me because I was credible."

The forum was the 10th and final instalment of the Perdana Discourse Series.

Jointly organised by Perdana Leadership Foundation and Universiti Teknologi Mara, the series was sponsored by Proton.