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Dr Mahathir tells why NEP must continue

KUALA LUMPUR: The New Economic Policy must continue because its objectives have not been met, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

Speaking after delivering a speech at the "Malay Dilemma: Perspective and Conclusive Symposium" yesterday, he said: "If we give it up, then the Malays won't get anything. If we continue to give, at least some will benefit."

However, Dr Mahathir said the government must be selective and give only to people who appreciate it.

"For example, if those given scholarships don't work hard, we can withdraw their scholarships."

Earlier in his speech, he said although he had always defended the NEP and spoke of the problems of the Malays, he was aware that if the Malays had truly made use of the opportunities given, they would have

achieved more than the 30 per cent target in equity ownership.

"We are not making use of the opportunities given. Instead, we do things to destroy ourselves and ruin the government's efforts to help the Malays."

Dr Mahathir also said there was a need for the Malays to change their culture and value system and grab the opportunities given by the government or risk being left out

of development.

"Apply positive values in life, like looking for a higher income in a halal way and not through bribes. We also need to work hard and lead by example. If we don't work hard despite the given opportunities, then we will never succeed."

He also spoke about the current Malay dilemma of not being able to speak out for the Malays for fear of being labelled as racists.