

# Dr M: It is not rocket science

## PM shares with global youth the key to being a good leader

By **WANI MUTHIAH**  
wani@thestar.com.my

SHAH ALAM: Announced as “the most experienced prime minister in the world” at a symposium here, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad shared his wisdom with some 1,000 student activists.

Besides telling them that leadership was a lifelong task of learning and experience, Dr Mahathir also emphasised the need for leaders to uphold good values and principles.

“To me, leadership is not rocket science. It is about everyday values,” Dr Mahathir told student leaders of 150 universities from 85 countries.

An effective leader, said Dr Mahathir, must have qualities that others would respect and want to emulate.

Leaders must also have integrity and honesty as lacking these would make them corrupt and untrustworthy, he added.

“The leader must be willing to work hard and have pride in their work.

“Apart from that, a leader must also have the hunger for knowledge and be aware of the changes around him,” said Dr Mahathir in his speech

**If a leader loses touch with his people and supporters, he ceases to be a leader.**

### **Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad**

at the opening of the 10th University Scholars Leadership Symposium 2019 here yesterday.

The week-long symposium, which revolves around the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals policy, features influential people from various global agencies sharing their knowledge and experience with student leaders.

Dr Mahathir said the symposium was designed for youth who are committed to making the world a much better place for all mankind.

“It is indeed a pleasure to see the young investing time to learn leadership skills and cultivate awareness of current issues, primarily on social development and humanitarian efforts that are being discussed

at this symposium,” he added.

It was crucial for youth to realise that if they were able to retain their ideals and values, there was much hope for the “somewhat derailed world to get back on track and give humanity a chance”.

The 94-year-old statesman also noted the importance of noble values in development.

“If we possess good values and we inculcate them in our way of life, and in turn, they then become a habit, we can be assured that our society is on the right track,” he said.

According to Dr Mahathir, there has been much emphasis in recent times on the need for youth to prepare themselves to face the Fourth Industrial Revolution or Industry 4.0, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, automation and other technological advancements that were expected to change the way things were done.

“We have also reminded ourselves and the younger generation that if we do not keep abreast (of things), we will be left behind in the global race, resulting in economic backwardness and even poverty,” he said.

Dr Mahathir added that youth must be able to remain competitive and capable of taking on the rest of the world while maintaining values and noble ideas.

He said he dread to imagine what kind of monsters would be produced in the future if negative values and counter cultures were the order of the day.

Besides being intelligent, a good leader needed to be able to differentiate between right and wrong as well as good and evil, he said.

The nonagenarian also told the student leaders that knowledge was never static but infinite.

“The more you seek, the more you realise that there is so much more to learn. Be humble and generous in seeking and sharing knowledge,” he added.

If there was no humility, said Dr Mahathir, a leader would be driven by ego which could be disruptive as it tended to make one unable to accept criticisms and differing opinions.

“Being humble does not make a leader weak. Instead, it binds him with the people.

“If a leader loses touch with his people and supporters, he ceases to be a leader,” he said.