

# THE KEY TO PROGRESS

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Good governance and stability will allow a country to develop, says PM



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**G**OOD governance and stability are important factors in changing the economy, thus leading a country to progress.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this in a video clip aired at the opening of the Third International Conference on the Emergence of Africa (ICEA-III) yesterday.

Dr Mahathir highlighted these two factors based on his experience governing and developing Malaysia from a developing nation to a middle-income nation.

“The most important thing in trying to change the economy of a country is stability and good governance. Once that is in place, the rest will follow suit,” he said, thanking the organisers of the conference for inviting him to

participate.

The three-day ICEA-III, themed “Emergence, Private Sector and Inclusiveness”, is being held at the Abdou Diouf International Convention Centre in Diamniadio, Senegal’s new administrative centre.

The conference was opened by Senegalese President Macky Sall and is attended by more than 1,000 people, international agencies and heads of state from Africa.

Dr Mahathir is the only leader outside Africa invited by the Senegalese government to share his experience and ideas on developing nations.

In his opening speech, Sall thanked Dr Mahathir for agreeing to participate in the

conference.

“We appreciate and are ready to listen to your experience and views as Malaysia’s Father of Modernisation.”

Dr Mahathir was part of a high-level dialogue session following the opening, alongside Sall, Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and Ivory Coast Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly.

At the session, he said Malaysia was lucky to achieve independence through negotiation and not through bloodshed, and this had allowed the nation’s leaders to start developing almost right from the start.

However, Dr Mahathir said the leaders had to introduce policies which could win over the hearts and minds of the people.

“Because of this, Malaysia continued to be peaceful and stable, allowing the nation to develop quickly and keep on developing.”

The prime minister said even though Malaysia at the time did not have the expertise or the technology to develop, it was not a problem as the government encouraged foreign investment.

He said through foreign direct

investment, such expertise and technology was brought in to Malaysia, allowing it to develop and industrialise.

As such, Dr Mahathir said he was confident that African nations could emerge as developed nations, even if they did not have the expertise and technology at present.

“There is no problem if you do not have the technical expertise, as you can bring in foreign investment. This will benefit your countries.”

Dr Mahathir touched on the principles of democracy a nation needed to uphold to develop.

He said a government needed to respect the results of ballots cast by its people when an election was held.

He said if a government lost the mandate of the people, then it needed to ensure that power was handed over to the new government smoothly to allow the latter to more effectively govern and administer the nation.

He said a smooth transition of power would ensure that the country remained stable and economic development was not affected.