

Dr M: It is up to the Malays

'They have to restore their dignity and not expect others to do it'

By WANI MUTHIAH
and TARRANCE TAN
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

SHAH ALAM: It is up to the Malays themselves to restore their own dignity as they cannot expect others to do it for them, says Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said there would not be much improvement in their situation if the Malays did not want to change for the better.

"We (the Malays) have committed many mistakes resulting in us being disrespected and our dignity derided," he said in his address at the Malay Dignity Congress here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said the Malays were the biggest group making up 60% of the population during independence.

Unfortunately, what resulted over the years was growing disunity within the community, which gave way to the existence of six Malay-based political parties, he said.

"No one did this to us. We did it to ourselves.

"When we became smaller groups, we fought each other

"The Malays also depended on others and were grateful to them as they (Malays) realised they cannot manage on their own without support," he said.

He chided Malays who sold off



One for the album: Dr Mahathir posing for a photograph with party leaders and members after delivering his speech at the Malay Dignity Congress in Shah Alam.

the benefits given to them, such as business licences and Approved Permits.

"Can you get rich by selling licences? You may get some quick money but this will not last long," he added.

Later at a press conference, Dr Mahathir defended his presence at the event, saying that he attended as a Malay.

He said the congress was not political in nature, although it was

attended by political personalities.

"It is not racial in nature, a gathering of Malays to seek ways to redeem the dignity of their race.

"We are not criticising other races here. We are not criticising the Chinese, we are not criticising the Indians but we are criticising the Malays who are not doing anything to redeem Malay dignity," said Dr Mahathir

To a question if the congress contradicted the Shared Prosperity

Vision 2030 (SPV 2030), which he launched on Saturday, the Prime Minister said SPV 2030 was meant for everyone.

"If the Malays do not grab the opportunities available in the vision, they will not be able to enjoy the shared prosperity," he added.

On Kampung Baru, Dr Mahathir said the land would be sold to a government agency to be developed, not to other parties.

He said the government agency would help landowners to develop Kampung Baru without neglecting the original features of the location.

"Previously, the land plots in Kampung Baru were under the Malay agricultural reserve land status.

"Now, the landowners cannot farm there, they can only do business there, but, they do not have enough money to develop the land.

"We can see old houses with rusty zinc roofs there, it is an eyesore in the middle of rapidly developing Kuala Lumpur which is full of skyscrapers.

"This does not reflect on the position of the Malays, who are actually as successful as other people," he added.

Watch the video
thestartv.com