

Dr M: Give us more time

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At least two years for industrial and agricultural plans to take off

PETALING JAYA: Amidst criticisms from detractors, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad says Malaysians should be patient as the government needs more time to transition from the previous administration,

The Prime Minister said the government had initiated a new industrial plan which is complemented by a new agricultural plan.

However, he acknowledged that the implementation of these plans might take at least two years or more but work on it had already started.

"For the observers, it would seem that nothing is moving. Rome was not built in one day. When Malaysia was switching from an agro-based economy to an industrial economy,

it also took time.

"But most of us cannot remember and the young never saw the transition. Most were born when the transition was accomplished.

"It is difficult to imagine an agricultural Malaysia today," he said on his blog yesterday.

Dr Mahathir pointed out that digitalisation was already happening and artificial intelligence (AI) was contributing towards increasing speed of work and transactions.

"Even for me it is frustrating to wait. But wait we must. The machinery of government has been cleansed and is rapidly adapting to the new ways of working.

"Even the ministers are adjusting to being in the government instead of the opposition," he said.

He slammed those who accused the government as directionless, claiming that it was made by those who "refuse to acknowledge reality".

"Are we really the same as the Malaysia under the previous government?"

"Or are they saying they prefer the kleptocratic government?"

"We don't steal money nor raise loans so as to have money for bribing people.

"We spend what we have. What we have is less money. We cannot afford to give free money to people.

"Our way is to increase or create jobs. But the people must be willing to take up the jobs or the business opportunities created," he added.

Dr Mahathir also pointed out that

the Malaysian economy and its currency were strong despite the market and its detractors who do not think so, adding that the government, as well as foreign and local investors, have faith in its financial and economic policies.

The government's Shared Prosperity programme was also a clear direction of the government, contrary to claims by its detractors, he said.

"We don't want to just recover and be prosperous. We want to share our wealth equitably," he said.

Dr Mahathir noted that these initiatives would become a clear contribution to the country's economy in time although it does not attract attention right now.