

We won't achieve Vision 2020, says Dr M blaming poor leadership
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By Anisah Shukry

Malaysia will not be able to achieve Vision 2020 and become a developed country within the next five years because it lacked leadership and had misplaced priorities, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said

The former prime minister said a developed nation requires high productivity, yet Malaysia focused solely on becoming a high-income nation and having high per capita income.

"We are not really going to achieve the kind of development that would qualify us as a developed country by the year 2020," Dr Mahathir said during a talk tonight organised by the Foreign Correspondents Club of Malaysia at the Hotel Istana in Kuala Lumpur.

He said per capita income was an "artificial" method to measure development, because it did not provide a fair picture of Malaysians' wealth.

"For example, if you have a group of one thousand people, and one of them is a millionaire, while the others earned zero, their income per capita would be RM1,000. This is very misleading."

He added that even if the country earned high-income status, it would not be developed if cost of living remained high as Malaysians would have low purchasing power.

He said the government should instead focus on improving education, increasing productivity and salaries, while keeping costs low.

"The leader plays a very big role too. If the leader doesn't understand and cannot resolve the problems the country faces, then it is doubtful progress can be made. A leader is a leader because he has more ideas than his followers," said Dr Mahathir.

He said a good leader would strive to maintain peace and stability, and would not hesitate to restrict the freedom of the people to achieve this.

"It's great to be free. But a leader must be concerned about the development of the country and be prepared to be unpopular to ensure that the country remains stable and peaceful so that everybody can enjoy a good life.

"If a leader doesn't know how to handle this thing, then of course, the country can't have peace. No peace means no development."

On May 21, Najib unveiled the 11th Malaysia Plan (11MP) as the final lap in the country's march to achieving developed status by 2020. – June 1, 2015

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