

**Malays Need To Strengthen Control Of Economy - Tun Mahathir
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- The Malays cannot be lazy and need to work hard to control the nation's economy so that they can have the portion they deserve when Malaysia achieves developed nation status by 2020, said Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The former prime minister stressed that the Malays cannot rely solely on political control because it may not last without a strong hold of the economy.

He said although the New Economic Policy (NEP) introduced in 1971 targetted 30 per cent equity for the Malays, the target was not met after 20 years of implementation.

"If we want our share, we Malays need to change our attitude, need to try harder to get our share in a developed nation.

"I worry that when we become a developed nation in 2020, the Malays will become the poor group in a rich country," he said when delivering the keynote address titled 'Hala Tuju Melayu Islam Menuju Wawasan 2020' at the Nusantara Young Malays Leadership Convention (NUSA'14) here Saturday.

Dr Mahathir also touched on politics involving the Malays, who were now split along three party lines, namely Umno, PAS and PKR, which he said caused Malay votes becoming a minority in a Malay-majority country.

The situation, he said, resulted in each Malay party to garner less than 50 per cent of support and thus had to beg for support from other races to win the election and stay in power.

"When they have to beg, they (Malay parties) are no longer in full control and this is the situation we are facing now," he said.

In addition, he emphasised the importance of the Malays practising true Islamic teachings and values.

"Progress or regress does not depend on skin colour, the resources we have or where we live, but on our culture and values," Dr Mahathir said.

"Good values such as honesty, trustworthiness and hard work must be made part of our culture. Prayers without effort will not get us anything," he said.

Replying to a question from one of the participants, Dr Mahathir restated his view on providing the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M).

"Create job opportunities and training for the people instead so they can increase their capabilities and knowledge, then they will get better jobs and higher salaries. That is the best way," he said.

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