

Dr Mahathir says always wanted to be a politician

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By M. Saraswathi

SINGAPORE, Nov 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he had always wanted to be a politician.

"I was a politician first, who became a doctor, because without some degree or awards from universities, people would not believe what I say to them."

However, he said medicine was a good foundation for politics.

"In medicine, when you have a problem, you go into the history, do some physical examination, X-ray and diagnose the disease and give treatment."

"In politics it is the same, administration is also the same, you have a problem, you get to the origins, the problem's history, look at what contributed to the problem, the nature of it and prescribe the medicine for it."

He said this in his acceptance speech after being conferred the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations (AFEEO)'s Distinguished Honorary Patron award here, today.

During the citation, AFEEO chairman Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ahmad Zaidee Laidin said: "Tun Dr Mahathir has achieved what we as engineers collectively never envisioned. He is one of us, for in the broadest sense, he engineered the scientific and technology base of the nation (Malaysia) through strategic advice and rare insight into the vast potential of Science, Engineering and Technology for the progress of the nation (Malaysia) and the region."

He went on to speak about how under his stewardship, numerous mega infrastructure projects materialised, notably the Kuala Lumpur City Centre [KLCC], PETRONAS Twin

Towers, Kuala Lumpur International Airport [KLIA] and Multimedia Super Corridor [MSC].

"His Vision 2020 was for Malaysia to attain fully-developed economy status by the year 2020, not just in terms of economic growth but also in terms of education, societal, maturity and governance.

"He opened Malaysia to Foreign investment, reduced international trade barriers, privatised government services as well as established world-class physical infrastructure."

"As a leader, Tun Dr Mahathir has succeeded in constructing and communicating convincingly a clear and persuasive message for change anchored on science, engineering and technology," said Ahmad.

Tun Dr Mahathir thanked AFEO for the award and said: "Now, I am going to be an engineer. I can engineer the hopes in my country. "

"I have resort to the normal things, stand for election and win the election, off course this is not particularly easy, I did not really think I would succeed , even now I keep pinching myself to ensure I am actually the Prime Minister (again)," he said to a thunderous applause.

His coalition Pakatan Harapan ousted the Barisan Nasional, which had been in power in Malaysia for six decades, in the 14th general election on May 14.

This is the second time Dr Mahathir, 93, has become the prime minister of the Malaysia, The first was from 1981 to 2003 when he was with the Barisan Nasional.

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