

'Key to success is in the people'

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Dr M: Invest in training and education

DOHA (Qatar): The secret to success for any country is its human resource, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed told the Al Jazeera cable news channel.

"Invest in education, training and human resource development; send the people overseas to learn new skills (to take the country forward), and learn to handle change," he told presenter-producer Ahmed Mansour during the taping of an interview which was broadcast yesterday in the news network's *Without Borders* programme.

"Have confidence in the people. Make them believe that they can do anything and that they are doing it for themselves, and adhere to Islam. Change the value system," he added, in response to a question on how Arab leaders can emulate the Malaysian success story.

The Arab world had natural wealth and intelligent people, a vast majority of whom migrated overseas because conditions were not conducive in their home countries, the elder



Dr Mahathir: 'Make them (the people) believe that they can do anything'

statesman noted.

"You just need direction," he said, explaining how Arab leaders should stop living in past glories and think instead of the present and the future and "do the right things".

Asked what was the timeframe required to produce tangible results, Dr Mahathir admitted that he was himself surprised that Malaysia ad-

vanced from being an agriculture-based society to an industrial one in just over a decade.

Posed a question on the rise of dissent as the people became more educated and began to question or criticise things, Dr Mahathir said: "A vast majority of people listen to reason. I could go around Kuala Lumpur without bodyguards because the people knew I was trying my best, doing my best, for the country."

The interview for the most part focused on the crises in West Asia and in Iraq, whereby Dr Mahathir was asked for his evaluation on various matters.

Criticising the injustice of the United States' new anti-Semitism law and the pressure it has asserted in causing some French journalists to be arrested and sacked for anti-Israeli statements, Dr Mahathir suggested that countries should give the United States a taste of its own medicine and formulate laws to prosecute the United States and Israel for criticising others. — Bernama