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Mahbubani Says China has `World's Most Meritocratic' Government

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By Ranjeetha Pakiam

June 16 (Bloomberg) -- **Kishore Mahbubani**, dean of the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy says Communist Party-run China has emerged as a model of good governance and it shouldn't be pushed to become more democratic immediately.

Mahbubani spoke to reporters at the World Economic Forum on East Asia in Kuala Lumpur.

``Because China is run by the Communist Party of China, people don't realize that China today has the most meritocratic government in the world. There are people who are selected to work as mayors, to serve as vice-ministers, who are highly qualified and are of a much higher degree of competence than their counterparts in America or Europe, but no one pays attention to that, and that's shocking.

``In America unfortunately, standards of governance are deteriorating. America provides now many models of incompetence. So we must learn that in some areas, we are now quite advanced and doing better than them, and in fact, it's time for them to come and learn from us.

``In the long run, all societies have to become democratic, there is no doubt about the long term destination. The only question is the route and if you can transform yourself and become a democracy overnight.

``Can someone show that if China goes democratic tomorrow, it'll be better off? It may not be better off, and therefore it's better for a gradual evolution. So it's a mistake for the West to say that all Asian societies should become democratic tomorrow. And that would be a very dangerous prescription for states."

On Fuel Price Demonstrations in Malaysia:

``I think demonstrations are a sign of democracy. Someone once told me in the old days when 50,000 miners went on strike in the U.K., the country carried on, democracies handle demonstrations, but when 5,000 miners went on strike in Poland, the system collapsed. So when you have demonstrations, it's a sign that your country can handle disturbances.

``Frankly, the conventional wisdom is that the recent election showed that there is strong democracy in Malaysia."

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