

Adjust your spending, says Dr M

NSunT 26 SEP 1987

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that given the gloomy world economic situation, Malaysians must adjust their spending and strengthen the foundations that will increase their resilience in all fields.

The Prime Minister, opening the Gerakan annual general assembly here, said: "We must not watch idly the current economic situation. We must adjust our spending according to our financial capability and view

the situation as an opportunity to strengthen the foundations that will increase our resilience in all fields."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is also the Barisan Nasional chairman, said all component parties of the Barisan must assist the Government to make position preparations "so that when the world economy recovers, we will be in the forefront to make use of all opportunities in an expanding economy."

He told the assembly that he was leaving tonight for New York to attend the United Na-

tions General Assembly.

The international economic and political situation, he said, was still at a stage that caused concern.

Although Malaysia was not seriously affected, she could not ascertain when the situation would return to normal.

Concerned

"It is our hope that the world economy will recover by the middle of next year," he added.

On the political front, the Prime Minister said Malaysia hoped that a

just solution would be achieved in West Asia and the situation in South-East Asia would become stable with a settlement of the Kampuchean problem.

As a member of the world community, Malaysia was concerned that the unstable economic and political situation would bring with it prolonged and more complex problems.

To deal with the current situation, it was necessary for all concerned, especially the developed and big nations to take really firm and bold actions.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir added that although, as a small country Malaysia's contribution towards solving these major problems would be like a drop in the ocean, it was her responsibility to express views as a concerned party.

"Although it is beyond our powers to solve the problems confronting the world, our co-operation with our friends at international forums demonstrates our concern and sincerity in helping search for settlement to mutual problems."

On the local political front, he cautioned against wrong perceptions of politics.

He said: "Politics is a means, not an objective. Taking politics as an objective could blind us to the real objectives: happiness, stability and harmony that should be enjoyed by the people of an independent, sovereign and progressive nation."

The Prime Minister reminded that Barisan Nasional component parties should always be careful in the country's political development.

He urged the parties to always keep in mind the perspectives and objectives of the Barisan as a whole.

"If the component party only cares about its own perspective, then the Barisan will find numerous problems which will affect its present understanding and discipline."

Malaysians should not worry about the allegations by some so-called democracy interpreters that the system existing here was not democratic, he said.

"We believe that no two nations are the same and nobody can say that the system they practise is the only true democracy," he said.

Malaysia, like any liberal country, had limitations on its democratic system to ensure that anarchy and chaos did not reign.

A liberal democracy on the lines of the West was not real democracy, he said as the "silent majority" was suppressed by the "activist minority."

He said: "We are lucky that a majority of the Malaysian people understand our system to suit our needs, because if the majority want a democracy without limitations, the system which will finally emerge will only bring an end to all freedom."