

Dr M slams NEP doubters

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SHAH ALAM, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged the people to have "open discussions" through forums and conventions to thrash out controversial issues and erase doubts about Government policies.

This was important, he said, in view of current psychological tactics employed by "political enemies" to create uncertainty among the people, particularly the Malays about the New Economic Policy.

Speaking at the fourth Selangor Umno convention at the Mara Institute of Technology here, he said the NEP had been exploited by these parties to split Malay solidarity.

lays have fallen prey to their tactics," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir emphasised that the communists knew that pitting the races against one another was not enough to win their struggle.

"They know they can only succeed if they enlist the support of the Malays," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also explained that the NEP was formulated to benefit all races and since its formulation no one could deny he had not profited from the policy, directly or indirectly.

"We have built schools, clinics, other facilities and even formulated

"They are going around alleging that the NEP is only benefiting a handful of Malays, namely, companions of Umno leaders, particularly my friends."

Coffee shops

He said they used cliches like the 'rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer' to arouse the sentiments of the people.

"They make these allegations to confuse the people so that they will oppose the Government and create a climate of unrest in the country.

"They know that if the people are not united, we can be defeated," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said in view of these allegations, the people should discuss openly without emotions their doubts and fears about Government policies.

"Talking in coffee shops with people having the same viewpoints is not the answer as emotions of jealousy and unrest would only be intensified.

"Uncertainty about policies like the NEP would still remain," he said.

The Prime Minister said through forums opposing views could be heard and doubts and fears minimised or erased.

He warned that if Malays were divided in their views and refused to hold open discussions their sentiments could be easily exploited by their enemies.

Benefit

The Prime Minister added that besides the "political enemies" the communists were also still trying to disunite the Malays by using Islam as an issue.

"They are enlisting the support of Malays by claiming that communism is not opposed to Islam and a number of Ma-

schemes so that Bumiputeras can be trained in business and be on par with the non-Bumiputeras."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said it was evident that Government policies were meant to help the rich and poor alike.

He explained that sometimes the Government helped the rich Bumiputeras in some ventures as the poorer ones might not have the expertise to manage such ventures.

"We can't, for example, give a contract to a taxi driver to build a factory. He would only be another 'Ali Baba' for he would give the project to another due to lack of expertise."

He urged the Malays not to harp too much on the poor-and-rich issue as this would only create jealousy among themselves.