

# 'Malaysia has achieved racial harmony'

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs.** — Malaysia has succeeded "more than anyone else" in achieving racial harmony, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Racial antagonism in the country has been reduced to manageable levels, the Prime Minister added in his speech at an international symposium organised by the Keio University in Tokyo. The text of his speech was released here.

Since independence, there has been only one major racial clash and this too was controlled within a period of just over a year. And since then, "stability is palpable".

"Malaysia has in fact developed at a much more rapid pace after the riots of 1969 than before. This is not to say that the riots were necessary," he said.

"But it did demonstrate to all the races in Malaysia the folly of allowing narrow racialism to take over."

Pragmatism has largely won the day since the riots and every race has learnt that no single race can have all that it wants for itself.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Malaysia can be regarded as doing well only when "everyone, every race, is fairly unhappy".

Should one particular racial group be very sat-

isfied and happy, it could only mean that their wishes have been catered for at the expense of the other races.

If this should happen, there is bound to be racial clashes, political instability and economic disruption.

He stressed that due to the need to balance the wellbeing of the different races and prevent confrontation and racial disturbances, development policies must be carefully formulated and implemented.

And as timing is crucial, the Look East, Malaysia Incorporated and Privatisation policies and concepts could not be introduced earlier as they would have been almost entirely unacceptable to the deprived Bumiputeras.

These policies must be prudently implemented even now.

The changes in Malaysia (with reference to the achievements of the New Economic Policy) have been remarkable, particularly so because it has been achieved under stable conditions in a democratic context.

"Certainly a few newly-independent countries have achieved this much without resorting to totalitarian styles and traumatic upheavals."

The Prime Minister said the question now is whether the need was merely to implement the NEP or to do something more to achieve the twin

aims of eradicating poverty and restructuring of society to make it less reversible.

"In other words, the basic reasons or causes for the economic disparities between the races, and the inability up to now to be a developed nation must be studied, understood and, where necessary, corrected."

Something more than just development plans and their vigorous implementation is needed.

"And it is that something more which the Malaysian Government is after now. If that something is not to be found at home, then Malaysia must look abroad."

The search for a foreign model was not too difficult. The rags-to-riches story of Japan and South Korea is well known.

Malaysia may be said to be in the "rags" stage that Japan was in after the Pacific War and it cannot afford a slow evolution that characterised European development.

The development must be rapid, to a certain extent even more rapid than that of Japan.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir today inaugurated the Tokyo branch office of the Malaysian Transnational Trading Corporation (Mattra).

The Prime Minister said the establishment of the office was not to compete with but to complement the activities of the Japanese sogoshoshas.