

Mahathir's exhortation to Malaysians

Be guided by nationalism

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — The Prime Minister today called on Malaysians to be guided by their nationalistic feeling when determining their actions at professional as well as at personal level.

By adopting nationalism as their guiding principle they would be imbued with sufficient sense of responsibility to the nation that they would loathe to take any action that could lead to the des-

truction of their country — their birthplace, the place they call home and the place they love.

Malaysia is a country of the Malays and the other Bumiputeras and people of Chinese, Indian and other origins.

"No matter how poor the country is, Malaysians must love Malaysia," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the opening of the 36th Umno General Assembly for the first time held within its own premises in the Putra World Trade Centre.

He called on everyone to help build up the nation and hinder those who would wreck it by their own self-interests.

The people can complement the Government's efforts towards increased productivity, prudent spending and reduced borrowings.

The Umno president, in his 39-page speech — The Community and Nationalism — urged the Malays not to be ashamed of their nationalism.

"I am not ashamed to say that my nationalistic spirit guides me in my actions," he said.

Dr Mahathir said although Umno is a nationa-

listic party but by virtue of all its members being Muslims and that it also struggles for the cause of Islam, it is also an Islamic party.

He stressed the compatibility between Islam and nationalism.

"The spirit of nationalism gives strength to the struggle of Islam and the brotherhood within it," he said.

He equated Malay nationalism in Umno with that of the *mujahiddin*

and said Umno would remain steadfast in Islam as it continues to defend the privileges of the Malays.

"Those who do so (give up the special position of the Malays) are betrayers of the Malay cause and are traitors to Islam," he said.

"Votes are important in a democracy, but we should not sell our race and ancestry for the sake of getting votes."

Malaysia's apparently secular administration did not contradict Islam by taking account of the half of the population who are non-Muslims, he argued.

"We do not want to be hypocrites. We do not want to make interpretations more rigid than required by Islam and then act contrary to the interpretations we have arrived at," he said.

The spirit of nationalism should propel the people to emulate others not encourage the "chest-

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beating" that belittles the non-Muslim minority, he said.

Both nationalism and patriotism, the Prime Minister urged, would provide the community with purpose and resolve to change attitudes and strengthen the spirit towards honour and resilience in the Malay people.

He criticised the threat of industrial action made by Cuepacs leaders in the civil servants' pay dispute as following a "dan-

gerous" path.

"Be careful," he cautioned. "I am aware that not all Government servants are interested to take part" in industrial action, he said.

"The Barisan Nasional Government is not willing to make Malaysia a bankrupt nation purely to fish for votes," he said. "We are not willing 'to mortgage' the nation for fear of losing election seats."

"The farmers and fishermen, smallholders and mine workers, all of them suffer, not only because of loss of or reduced income but are also hit by inflation," said the Prime Minister.

"Therefore, does the Government need to entertain its staff only without taking into consideration the needs of the other citizens?" he asked.

The Prime Minister's desire for nationalism appeared relevant to his call for sacrifice under the rigours of the economic recession.

"We must be thrifty and control our expenditure. The nation's development can no longer be carried out as rapidly as before, and projects and subsidies have to be re-

duced," he said.

Dr Mahathir took a swipe at certain leaders of a component party for alleging that Umno had a hand in choosing the leaders of that party.

He said Umno was disappointed that the BN's efforts to resolve the problems of the party before the next general election was seen as interference by certain groups.

These leaders must remember that whatever action taken to resolve problems of component parties was in the larger interest of the BN and the nation, he said.

The Umno leader said that his party wished to see the Chinese, the second largest racial group in the country after the Malays, continue to be represented in the Government but they must be led by sincere and honest people and not those given to promoting self-interests.

Umno accepted the fact that Malaysia is a multi-racial country and as such was prepared to co-operate with the other races as long as their struggle did not conflict with the interests of the nation or of Umno's.