

P M: THINK POSITIVE

STAFF. 4 NOV 1998

'Despite the bad times, we need not be over-pessimistic'

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun.
— **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged the nation today to look into the future with a positive mind and not to be over-pessimistic at a time of global recession.**

"There is an even greater need now to be positive, to look for opportunities and to manage them to our advantage.

"We need more and greater amounts of energy and thinking if we hope to lift the organisation from the state of survival to the level of excellence," the Prime Minister said.

He stressed that this "thinking" was needed more than ever now when the world was

going through a period of unprecedented recession.

Dr Mahathir said that the world had gone into recession before and had recovered.

"And so, despite the prevailing bad times we need not be over-pessimistic. We need not give in passively, seek excuses or hurl accusations.

"But the recovery to come soon, the present recession must be managed by managers at all levels," he said when opening the 20th World Management Congress here.

He noted that the business environment of today was increasingly characterised by intensified domestic and global competition, economic uncertainty, accelerated technological breakthroughs, constantly shifting markets, fundamental

changes in consumer behaviour and the alternating calls for liberal trade and protectionism.

The only thing that was certain, he said, was uncertainty.

In this respect, he said that managers who could only manage under fixed conditions were not truly managers.

"The real managers are those who can forecast and foresee changes, who can meet them and overcome them.

"It is during uncertain conditions that the best qualities of the managers are tried and tested. It is then that their ability to manage for excellence will show up," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said it was unthinkable that the market economy the managers had built up to benefit human prosperity could so deteriorate that the man-

agers could not put it right again.

The important thing to do, he said, was to have an enquiring mind, an eye for opportunity, and total commitment to the task of managing whatever there was to maximum benefit.

In fact, there were many instances where managers had rose to the occasion and had profited, he added.

"Thus when foreign exchange becomes a problem for many countries, managers have adapted and benefited from counter-trade."

On the congress's topic of discussion, *Management for Excellence*, Dr Mahathir said "perfect management was unattainable for only God is perfect.

"But we must still try, and even if perfection is not achieved, we will at least be less imperfect.

"And that is worth the labour."



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