

# MAHATHIR: FACTORS THAT ADD TO NATION'S STRENGTH

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ALOR STAR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today attributed Malaysia's strength to the spirit of co-operation between the various States and the sharing of their natural resources.

Their combined effort has built Malaysia into a progressive and respected nation.

The various States would not have developed to their current levels if each had stood alone, depending on its own resources.

"A lot has been achieved because of co-operation and unity between the various States," he said at the opening of the Syarikat Perniagaan Peladang Mada's (SPPM) headquarters here this evening.

The sharing of wealth by richer States like Perak, Selangor and Johore has led to the progress of the nation.

Poorer States like Kedah and Perlis would not have been able to develop if they had depended only on their padi, rubber and other natural resources such as rattan and timber.

"If any State tries to survive on its own, there will not be enough money for development nor money to pay its civil servants. It is because the various States are united that we are able to pay higher wages and bring development to the nation."

Kedah, for instance, could not have implemented the \$400 million irrigation scheme for farmers in 1960 if it had depended on its own resources.

Neither could it afford its own navy or air force to defend its borders.

International financial institutions like the World Bank had financed the irrigation project because they believed in the nation's ability to repay its loans.

The Prime Minister also spoke of unity among the various Malaysian races, saying it was through this cohesion Malaysia achieved independence from Britain.

"We should, therefore, always value unity," he said. "Unity gives strength to the weak while disunity always leads to further weaknesses."

He urged Malaysians not to allow disunity to creep into their midst as "we will then be governed by others who will work against our interests". — **By BALAN MOSES.**