

Accept foundation laid by past leaders: PM

By AZAM ARIS

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged leaders of Barisan Nasional component parties to preserve peace, prosperity and national unity by accepting the foundation laid by its past leaders.

Close cooperation and understanding among the different races and the component parties have ensured peace and constant progress for the country in the past 30 years.

Dr Mahathir said the spirit of trust and cooperation, and the foundation laid by the leaders of the Alliance in the past and the BN now should be protected and continued.

In this respect, he said, there is no place for racists, extremists and religious fanatics in the country. The country is what it is today because the

majority of Malaysians practise moderation.

He said the demands of the different races and component parties should be realistic and in line with the Malaysian aspiration.

"There are differences among the 13 component parties but we have learnt to solve these differences through consultation, not confrontation.

"We have managed to solve various problems and put aside differences to ensure peace and prosperity in the country," he said at a gathering to mark Malaysia Day in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The Prime Minister said peace and development in the country could be disrupted if each race does not take into

account the interest of others.

Some of the things that have been agreed upon by past leaders are based on trust and were achieved through consultation. These should be left alone and not be used to raise conflicts.

Citing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Dr Mahathir said peace can never be achieved as long as there are extremists on both sides whose demands are unrealistic and cannot be accepted by the majority.

Dr Mahathir said youth leaders are normally an aggressive lot and urged them to be moderate by learning from past examples of the Alliance and BN leadership.

He urged the BN youth wings to maintain close coo-

peration as this will lead to better understanding among the leaders of the future.

On unity, Dr Mahathir said this cannot be maintained if the country is ruled by parties which practise racism and whose leaders are religious fanatics.

He said BN's convincing win in the last election shows that the people have chosen a moderate coalition which represents all the races in the country.

"We have to love our country as we love our family. We have to protect the country and not let it to be destroyed," he said.

Dr Mahathir reminded the people not to forget September 16 as the day Malaysia was formed.

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