

Bumi gains due to Umno: Mahathir

13 APR 1987

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The achievements of the Bumiputeras are due to Umno's struggle, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said it was important that the past be remembered so that "we do not forget the foundation of the nation's success".

If Umno was not the backbone of the Government, the Bumiputeras would be as neglected as they were under colonial rule.

Opening the new Mara building here, the Prime Minister said that although Bumiputeras had attained a higher level of success, especially in commerce and industry, it still could not be considered satisfactory.

"But it cannot be denied that on the whole we have achieved outstanding success compared with other nations."

Even the success of Mara, he added, was due to the activities of Umno.

"Without Umno to champion the rights of Bumiputeras, Mara would not have accomplished its objectives."

He said all the previous Umno leaders, from Datuk Onn Jaafar to Tun Hussein Onn, had not neglected the development of the Bumiputeras.

All of them, he said, gave priority to Mara and this resulted in the agency becoming a force in efforts to correct the economic imbalance between Malays and the non-Malays.

Dr Mahathir said the Government could formulate policies like the New Economic Policy but without the machinery, the objectives of the policies would not be achieved.

"We should remember the beginnings and struggle of Mara so that we will not forget the basis of our success. We should also be thankful for the success we have achieved."

"But we must also identify our weaknesses so that we can overcome them and continue with our efforts to uplift the economic status of the Bumiputeras."

Need for expertise

"If we do not forget our history and foundation and know how to be grateful for what we have achieved, I am confident that we can attain a higher level of success."

Dr Mahathir also said that thanks to Mara's efforts, Bumiputeras now had the courage to venture into areas which were closed to them before.

He also said Bumiputera entrepreneurs should not be disheartened by the setting-up of Mara-owned companies and the competition they represented.

"We should instead work to ensure our success," he said.

He said the Government could continue to provide allocations and create business opportunities but this would not guarantee success.

Bumiputeras must have the expertise and Universiti Utara Malaysia was set up primarily to provide Malay entrepreneurs with management training.

Dr Mahathir hoped the new Mara building would not only be a symbol but a facility to ensure that Bumiputeras achieve success in all fields.