

# HELP CORRECT WRONG IMAGE, BANKERS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged bankers tonight to dispel the "erroneous impressions caused by irresponsible and malicious remarks of some Malaysians" about the country.

The Prime Minister said foreigners had been given the impression that the Chinese "are about to revolt against the Government."

As a result of such talk, foreigners lost faith in Malaysia and Malaysians of all

aces suffer, he said.

"The fact that the majority of the Chinese in this country are loyal and want stability is ignored.

"Although Malaysians are not a model of racial harmony, its people are better at finding compromises and getting along with each other than most multiracial countries. Relative to other countries, ours is a stable and peaceful country," he said.

Speaking at a joint-annual

dinner of financial institutions, he suggested that the banks set up special departments to promote foreign investment and to advise local businessmen on joint ventures with foreigners.

Dr Mahathir also said that there was a lack of entrepreneur talent in Malaysia. "Malaysia cannot produce giant entrepreneurs because Malaysians are not able to put together the vision to create new things, be more competitive and be

more ingenious.

"We seem to lack the real entrepreneurship to pull all this together particularly in the manufacturing field.

"These values are by no means absent in Malaysia," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that bankers as custodians of public funds, had become custodians of another key resources — the country's tiny pool of entrepreneurial talent.

"The fate of many bud-

ding entrepreneurs now lie in your hands. To a large extent their survival depends on whether bankers think their ideas can be made commercially viable.

"Bankers must also continue to help those ventures that possibly will turn around with economic recovery.

"They must have the foresight and must not foreclose every project merely because they are non-performing loans.

"Bankrupting our entrepreneurs simply because the recession has rendered them incapable of servicing their loans will not help anyone — not the borrower, the bank or the nation," he said.

He said the entrepreneurs needed support and encouragement.

"But with less support coming from home, even the most intrepid of entrepreneurs are likely to throw in the towel," he added.