

# PM: It's up to the people

**MYT 2 1 MAR 1988**

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun.** — It is the people who will ultimately determine the destiny and the development of the country, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Addressing the Unity Big Walk at Padang Merbuk this morning, the Prime Minister said everyone had an equal say in the shaping of the nation.

"If we want the country to develop and be peaceful, we can have that. But if we do not want development or deliberately impede the nation's progress, that is also up to us."

About 7,000 people took part in the Big Walk organised by the National Unity Department and aimed at fostering racial unity.

Dr Mahathir, who had earlier flagged off the participants, said he was confident the people wanted Malaysia to develop further and be recognised as a newly industrialised country (NIC).

However, in order to attain this, the people must understand the Government's aspirations.

Policies were implemented for the good of the people but to ensure that their objectives were achieved, the people must accept the Government's aspirations as their own.

"What we want is for the country to be developed, peaceful and harmonious ... where there is enough revenue and where the unemployment rate is low. This is our vision for the future."

However, Dr Mahathir warned that it was not enough to have a vision alone: the people must also work hard to improve the nation's performance.

He also spoke of the need for the various races to be united, saying that if there was racial co-operation and understanding, the country would be peaceful and the Government in turn could concentrate fully on nation-building.

Dr Mahathir said if the various races chose to be hostile towards each other, the country would be unstable and this would adversely affect the people.

It was therefore imperative for citizens to understand and appreciate one another's cultures and to be tolerant of differences.

Dr Mahathir made it clear there was no single race that was 100 per cent good, adding that imperfections were to be found in those races who regarded themselves as "good".

"We must, therefore, remember that there is some good and bad in all individuals. We should never regard ourselves as the only good ones."

He added that if the people understood that everyone was made up of good and bad, they could accept the imperfections in others.

With this understanding, the various races could find a meeting point to appreciate and comprehend one another.

Dr Mahathir said although Malaysia was a multi-racial country, it was more peaceful than even some

# PM: NEED FOR MORE EVENTS TO BUILD UNITY

NST 21 MAR 1968

★ FROM PAGE ONE

homogenous societies.

Malaysians could further improve this racial harmony by working harder to fostering better relations.

For example, he said the Chinese could help the Malays in business. The Malays, on the other hand, should not complain that other races were hindering their success.

The Malays should conduct studies to pinpoint their weaknesses and take steps to remedy them.

"I am confident that with racial understanding and co-operation, the country will be as successful as other nations. We can stand just as tall as others."

He also hoped that events such as the one held today would be organised in other places "so that racial unity could be fostered and an able and capable Malaysian race cherishing peace and harmony can be forged."

Dr Mahathir later presented the prizes to the winners of the Big Walk.

The crowd was entertained by singers Sudirman Haji Arshad, Robin Chow and Kesovan.