

WE CAN MAKE IT, SAYS PM

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By Idzan Ismail

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Da-tuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today racial differences in Malaysia is not a problem that cannot be overcome.

The Prime Minister said it could not be denied that racial tension existed in the country.

He said, however, the problem was not so serious that the people could not inter-mingle.

"The Malays are not afraid to go to Chinese new villages and the Chinese, too, are not afraid to enter Malay kampungs," Dr Mahathir said when launching the Federal Territory Semarak (Loyalty with the People) campaign at Kampung Relawan in Jalan Gurney. He later renamed the road Jalan Semarak.

Thousands of people converged at the squatter village, also renamed Kampung Semarak, for the gathering which carried the theme *Loyalty With The People Towards Racial Unity*.

In his 45-minute speech which centred on unity, Dr Mahathir said the Government was always alert to the situation and ensured it did not get out of hand.

He said priority had always been given to efforts aimed at alleviating racial tension among the people.

"In this, we have succeeded and it is due solely to our efforts and not our past colonial masters . . . I hope that with the awareness (to foster unity) the nation

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will continue to prosper," he said.

"That the people of different races, cultures, languages and religions can live in peace means Malaysia must be a model nation to the world," he said.

"I have met many diplomats and foreign dignitaries who praised Malaysia for having open house on festive occasions which they described as special and unique," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should not be influenced by allegations that racial tension in the country was extremely serious and that there was no contact among the people.

"If there are people who say that Malaysia has not been successful in uniting the various races, they are lying," he added.

TENSION

Dr Mahathir said it was not unusual if there was racial tension here when there was tension among groups in countries whose people were of the same race and religion.

He said it was fortunate that Malaysia, in particular Kuala Lumpur, had seen rapid growth since independence and the standard of living had gone up significantly when compared to some other countries.

Dr Mahathir said he wanted to see Kuala Lumpur become a garden city with clean air and the roadsides lined with trees and shrubs.

"I want all residents, from Kenny Hills to squatter houses, to make Kuala Lumpur the cleanest city in the world. We love the city," he said, adding that additional allocations would be made for the development of the city.

The Prime Minister said better facilities would be made available to the squatters.