

# What CHOGM NST 26 OCT 1989 success

## has proved

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Malaysia's success in organising the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting has effectively disproved misconceptions that an Islamic country is incapable of such a task, Prime Minister **Datuk Seri** Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said Malaysia had agreed to host CHOGM to prove this point.

"We are not out to praise ourselves . . . only to give the world a better understanding and to disprove misconceptions about Islamic countries and their leaders," he told about 100 *ulamak* after a *tahlil* and prayer session at **Pusat Islam**.

Dr Mahathir regretted that certain countries with large Muslim populations could not even officially acknowledge themselves as Islamic nations.

### Astounded

He said popular misconceptions about Islamic leaders included views that they were dictators, rich war-mongers always out to topple existing Governments through bloody *coup d'etat*, weak and people who ignored the plight of their own people.

Commonwealth leaders, he said, however, recently saw the collapse of such misconceptions as Malaysia did not reflect them.

Another major misconception, particularly among African leaders, that Malaysia is backward was also disproved, he added.

Some of these leaders who attended Friday prayers at the Saidina Othman Mosque in Bandar Tun Razak were astounded by its beauty and the affluence of its congregation.

"These leaders were impressed with what we have and they felt proud that Malaysia has proven that an Islamic country can match the Western coun-

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# We can do just as well, says PM

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tries . . . whatever they can do, we can do it too," he said.

Dr Mahathir said certain Muslims failed to appreciate their good fortune and instead chose to make criticisms that were of no

use to the community.

He said Muslims were able to rule over Muslims and non-Muslims alike; although they constituted only 50 per cent of the population.

"Muslims must also look after the welfare of non-Muslims and this should be

the thrust of *dakwah* work to attract better understanding and eventually lead more to the faith," he added.

Dr Mahathir was unhappy that the insistence of certain Muslims on a "yardstick to measure faith" had inadvertently

frightened non-Muslims.

He said these Muslims kept preaching only what Islam disallowed but never seemed to preach what Islam allowed.

Muslims should not be arrogant but rather make attempts to **socialise** with non-Muslims.