

'Be thankful for peace and progress'

# Preserve political stability, urges PM

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminded Malaysians tonight of the need to preserve political stability and racial harmony to ensure further economic progress.**

In his Hari Raya message over Radio and Television Malaysia, the Prime Minister said the people should be thankful for the peace and progress in the country.

"We are indeed fortunate because there is political stability in the country. There is also racial harmony and understanding," he said.

Dr Mahathir said political stability and racial harmony were crucial, adding that every citizen was responsible in preserving this so that the country remained peaceful and progressive.

"We must remember that in places where there are political instability and racial conflict, progress and development in whatever field are difficult to achieve. Riots may also break out."

He noted that Malaysia's economy was improving. It achieved a growth rate of 8.1 per cent in 1988 — the highest in the 80s.

Balance of payment continued to be strong while commercial export reached double digit growth for two consecutive years after 1987. The Federal Government's financial position was now stronger.

The Government was confident that the economic growth for 1989 would continue to be encouraging.

Dr Mahathir said there was a need to ensure that domestic and foreign private investments continued to grow as they were engines for economic growth.

The Prime Minister also touched on tourism, saying that the success of the Visit Malaysia Year campaign did not depend on

the Government alone, but also the people.

He said the success of the campaign meant better business and employment opportunities as well as a more progressive economy.

Dr Mahathir said everything that was happening to the country was closely related to the way the people live.

"If the political climate is not stable, we will feel the effect like the one experienced by people in a number of countries where riots erupted because of political instability."

He said the people must not forget the May 13 incident or the state of economy recently.

He said if there was an economic downturn, there would be more unemployment and less

income for the businessman and working people.

He wished Selamat **Hari Raya** to members of the security forces and workers in certain departments who would be working during **Hari Raya**.

He noted that there were members of Malaysian armed forces who would be celebrating **Hari Raya** in Namibia, Iran and Iraq. They are part of the team of armed forces from a number of countries serving under the United Nations to preserve peace in these countries.

Dr Mahathir, in congratulating and thanking them, said their task was honourable and prayed that God would always protect them.

He also wished Selamat **Hari Raya** to all

# Heads of state call for goodwill

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Muslims and hoped that non-Muslims would join in the celebrations.

Meanwhile, Hari Raya messages calling for goodwill and the need to foster national unity were sent by Heads of State and political leaders.

The Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan urged all Muslims to carry on the good deeds of the fasting month to foster brotherhood, co-operation and moderation among the people.

"We hope all Malaysians can live happily together, co-operating with one another in all endeavours, thereby making Malaysia a better place to live in, irrespective of race or religion."

He said the recent improvements in commodity prices had resulted in the country earning a bigger revenue, thus allowing more funds to be allocated for the welfare of the people.

"It is hoped that the Government will not forget the poor and needy, who are still very much prevalent in kam-pungs, estates and new villages."

In Kota Kinabalu, Sabahans were urged to maintain their long-standing tradition of cultural and religious tolerance to ensure the success of socio-economic development programmes in the State.

Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tan Sri Haji Mohamad Said Keruak, in his Hari Raya message, also said that the people should sink their differences to promote unity.

He also called on the people to remember the sacrifices made by the security forces.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan said the spirit of toler-

ance and understanding among the people must be preserved as it is the foundation of a united society.

The tradition of mutual tolerance in a multi-racial society is vital when the society faces threats of disunity.

Datuk Seri Pairin also called on the people to extend the hand of friendship to create a harmonious atmosphere for the present and future generations.

Former Chief Minister and Usno president Tun Datu Haji Mustapha Datu Harun, in a similar Hari Raya message, urged Muslims in Sabah to forget their differences and to strive for unity.

Without unity, no country can progress, he said.

In Ipoh, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ramli Ngah Talib urged Muslims in the State to unite in order to build a prosperous and peaceful nation.

In his Hari Raya message, he also called on Muslims to extend goodwill to non-Muslims in celebrating the festival.

"Welcoming others to celebrate with us will show others that Islam preaches goodwill and love."

Datuk Seri Ramli advised Muslims to be thrifty and not to forget the less fortunate when celebrating:

In Alor Star, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Haji Osman Aroff called on Muslims to redress injustices and misdeeds in society, and to remember the unfortunate and the needy on this auspicious day.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, in his message, said such festive occasions have contributed greatly in strengthening goodwill and harmony in the country.