

Groups trying to interfere PM: We will defend the system

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — The Government will continue to defend the country's system of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy and will oppose any attempt to destroy it, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said although there were so-called human rights groups within and outside the country attempting to interfere in the administration of the country, the Government was firm in its stand to sustain what it had fought for.

"There is a small group of people trying to use the institutions of the Rulers, courts and the judiciary as well as the election system for their own ends. But I believe that the Rulers are not happy with this and are not easily made use of," he said in his congratulatory address and pledge of loyalty at an investiture ceremony at Istana Negara.

"I believe that with your wisdom in ruling the nation and your symbol of sovereignty and un-

ity, the people will continue to enjoy a happy and peaceful life," he said.

On political developments, Dr Mahathir said the strength of Umno enhances the strength of the Barisan Nasional.

"The strength of the Barisan Nasional in turn strengthens the Government's system of administration," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that as the Barisan Nasional chairman, he would ensure that unity among the component parties was perpetuated so that the Barisan Nasional would be able to continue to implement Government policies.

On the national economic policy after 1990, Dr Mahathir said the Government had given intellectuals, political leaders, professionals and those critical of the New Economic Policy, the opportunity to make suggestions to the National Economic Consultative Council.

On the economy, he said the Government was grateful it had improved further since early this year after recording encouraging growth in the last two years.

The gross domestic product last year was better than that in the last 10 years.

He said the Government's confidence

★ PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 2, COL 8

Pledge to fight dadah menace

★ FROM PAGE ONE

stemmed from the success of programmes to strengthen the economic structure, which include making the economy less dependent on the export of primary commodities and developing instead the manufacturing industry.

On Malaysia's role abroad, the Prime Minister spoke of our contribution in the fight against dadah abuse.

The Government would continue enforcing the laws against dadah abuse, including the mandatory death sentence for those found guilty of trafficking.

Dr Mahathir said as a member of the UN Security Council, Malaysia was able to play a more effective role, such as sending its soldiers as part of the UN peace-keeping force to Iran, Iraq and Namibia.

He added that the Government would fulfil its duties "with confidence and dedication" as host of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in October and the 15th SEA Games in August.