

# Mahathir: Avoid negative actions

By AZAM ARIS

MALAYSIANS should avoid using statistics to draw conclusions during political or economic discussion as this can lead to confusion among the people.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said care needs to be taken when discussing statistics as wrong interpretation can easily result in jealousy and suspicion.

"Quoting statistics in public without any concrete basis and detailed studies is a disservice to society. We should learn from past mistakes and should not repeat them," he said at the opening of the 36th MCA general assembly in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the people should also avoid taking negative actions which can affect the nation's economy.

"In the past, sweeping statements were made that affected the public's confidence in the country's stability and economy. This sort of action has caused the people and the country to

suffer," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the country has made strong economic recovery and there are indications that this growth can be sustained in the coming years.

Although the 8.7 per cent growth in the economy in 1988 will not be achieved this year, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government is confident that Malaysia can achieve 6 per cent growth in the coming years.

He said the Government will continue to implement corrective measures to improve the economy further.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government's move to set up the National Economic Consultative Council (NECC) is to ensure the people participate in deciding the country's future economic policy.

"The Government has the ability

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and expertise to draft out the post-1990 economic policy but we prefer to open it to the public via the NECC. The Government will then study the NECC's recommendations," he said.

The Prime Minister said the spirit of cooperation among the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties should be upheld because this can pave the way for the different races in the country to solve their problems amicably.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir who is also the BN chairman, said the party's victory in recent by-elections showed the people, especially the silent majority, still support the party.

However, there are areas where the BN lost to the opposition in the by-elections and this showed that democracy is still alive in this country.

"Despite the opposition's victory and the fair manner in which the elections are held, there are still certain groups which allege that there is no democracy in this country. We assure the people that under the BN, democracy will continue to strive," said the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he will allow any of the BN coalition partners to hold a "second stage" cooperation with any coalition party as this can further strengthen the BN.