

PM: Moderates must join forces to curb extremism

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Moderates must come together to prevent the country from falling into the hands of extremists, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

The Prime Minister said if extremists took over, there would be chaos and racial strifes.

If political instability was prolonged, some people might start having "ideas" about ruling the country without going through the democratic process, Dr Mahathir said at a dinner hosted in his honour by the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Also present were Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk

Lee Kim Sai, Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek, Health Minister Ng Cheng Kiat, Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Amar Stephen Yong, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, and chambers president Tan Sri Wee Boon Ping.

Dr Mahathir also said that each time a general election was near the government would be under tremendous pressure because of demands and threats by certain people.

He said, however, that the government would have to study the demands and not accede to all of them.

Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional realised the importance of sitting

together to make decisions for the good of all the communities.

Some countries stifled the opposition by all means, Dr Mahathir said, adding: "But we don't do this kind of thing here. Even Lim Kit Siang can say all kinds of things. Look at the (DAP organ) *Rocket*. From page 1 to 20, it has nothing but cursing of the government."

Dr Mahathir also commended the Malaysian Chinese community for playing their role in the economic development of the country.

He said Malaysia was one of the few multi-racial countries able to develop its economy rapidly and yet maintain political stability.