

Dr M: Malaysia must adapt to changes in world

By OUR REPORTER

MALAYSIA must be able to adapt to changes in the world if it aspires to join the ranks of the developed nations. This ability can be nurtured through programmes and measures that take into consideration the changing world scenario, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The environment around us will not be what we want it to be, it is always changing. We have to be able to adjust to the changes," he said after launching the Kampungku (My Village) project in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was responding to newsmen's queries on his plans for the coming year.

"My aspiration for 1991 is the same as that of other people, and that is to develop the country."

The Prime Minister said the nation can draw from the experience it has had with the implementation of various policies such as the Look East policy, a policy that has taught Malaysia how Japan has been able to adapt to the various changes and pressures.

"For example, when the oil price went up, Japan adapted to it and stepped up productivity so

that it could still market its goods. And when pressed by the US and Europe to revalue the yen, Japan did so but did not become less competitive as a result.

"From this, we can learn that problems can be overcome if we plan to take into account changing circumstances," he said.

Earlier, he called on the people in the kampungs to help develop their villages in pace with national development.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government will ensure that all kampungs are well-planned and comfortable to live in.

"A progressive kampung means a progressive nation, and when the villagers are successful it means the nation is successful," he said. In his address, which was telecast live over RTM, the Prime Minister spoke of the origin of Kuala Lumpur as a tin mining village and how it has grown into a city known throughout the world.

He said it is the Government's hope that other kampungs will also be developed through a systematic programme and enjoy various modern amenities.

In this connection, he said, the

people should be made aware of their role to join hands and develop their respective kampungs to enable them to enjoy the comfort and facilities available in the towns.

He also said that merging small kampungs is another way of developing villages, and that this will facilitate the provision of basic amenities. In this way, the kampungs can be structured to keep pace with the intensive development taking place around the country, he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir expressed hope that all quarters will cooperate and give attention to the Kampungku project to achieve a balance in the development of the urban and the rural areas and in making Malaysia the most progressive among developing nations.

The project, which is being organised by the Information Ministry and the Utusan Melayu newspaper group, is aimed at fostering the spirit of togetherness in society, making the rural people aware of national development and instilling in them the urge to progress, and obtaining feedback on rural conditions from the villagers.

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