

Groundwork for success has been laid

# Dr M calls for that extra push

By Ahmad A. Talib

**KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Greater commitment to hard work, better implementation of Government policies and continued peace and stability are some of the basic national ingredients for greater success in the 1990s, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.**

The Prime Minister said the quest for success should also be backed by a stronger resolve to raise the nation's living standards.

Dr Mahathir said every preparation has already been put in place for the nation's move towards greater development and fulfilment of its national goals and aspirations.

The Prime Minister made this statement in his televised New Year message tonight.

The nation's peace, stability and prosperity were not gifts but were the fruits of labour from the country's multi-racial society. Their diligence and perseverance over the years had helped the nation achieve the success it now enjoyed.

He said although there were attempts by a small group of people to sow the seeds of racial discontent and create discord among the various ethnic groups, their attempts had all failed.

Instead, the people's unity, understanding and harmony had strengthened and this would augur well for the country in the years ahead.

"The year 1990 will go down in history as a meaningful year with great significance to our nation. This include the end of a big socio-economic programme ever attempted by a developing nation.

## Eradicate poverty

"Although some people believed that the New Economic Policy failed after exactly 20 years of implementation, in truth its success has been extraordinary compared to similar programmes undertaken by Governments elsewhere."

He said Malaysia's attempt to distribute the nation's wealth among its peoples had been more successful even if the success rate was as high as planned.

But it should be noted that when the wealth distribution was being conducted, the nation's economy was not adversely affected. Instead, the economy expanded rapidly.

"In this light, we should show more confidence in our ability to formulate policies and programmes and have them carried out efficiently and successfully.

"Self-confidence is vital to face the challenges of the 1990s. We not only need to eradicate poverty, but we also need to distribute our wealth while maintaining our high economic growth rate so as to achieve our ambition of becoming a developed nation.

"God willing, we can plan our development programmes and carry them out to provide a decent life and respect to this beloved country and its multi-racial population.

"The people of this country loves stability and peace. We are not inclined to take to the streets when confronted with problems. We are not keen in resolving industrial disputes by undermining our investment climate. We're law abiding and proper."

He said the nation's workers were more progressive and efficient, with the ability to undertake all types of jobs that were usually associated with workers from developed countries only.

The nation's education level too was high, the Prime Minister said, adding that the country's exposure to foreign culture had not been eroded.

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## Dr Mahathir: People must work harder

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He said the privatisation concept, which was once a burden to the nation, was showing benefits to the practitioners, adding that people's purchasing power had also increased following the reduction in certain taxes.

Reducing taxes had more impact than increasing wages in fighting inflationary tendencies, Dr Mahathir said as he pointed out the fallacy that increased wages could overcome the problems of rising prices.

The Prime Minister outlined the responsibilities of the people and the Government in meeting future challenges.

He said the people need to have a deeper understanding of the nation's needs, and to continue to

work hard with greater dedication and patience.

As for the Government, Dr Mahathir said the Government would formulate new policies to bring balanced development to all the communities besides eradicating poverty.

These plans would be carried out more efficiently and effectively, he added.

The Prime Minister ended his address by reminding the people that nothing was beyond the country, provided that the people were willing to learn from their mistakes, and move ahead with dedication and renewed commitment.

"Countries which are now developed were backward once. If we want, and if we proceed with what we should, then we should be a developed nation faster than other developing countries."