

All must help realise goal set by PM for Malaysia

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has outlined nine challenges that have to be overcome for Malaysia to be a developed nation by the year 2020.

In his working paper "Malaysia: The Way Forward" presented at the inaugural meeting of the Malaysian Business Council recently, the Prime Minister said the most fundamental and basic of the nine challenges was the formation of a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny.

He also stated that Malaysia must be a country that is ethnically integrated, living in harmony with full and fair partnership, made up of one *Bangsa Malaysia* with political loyalty and dedication to the nation.

These lofty ideals expounded by the Prime Minister are worthy of support by all Malaysians irrespective of race who want to see Malaysia emerge as a strong, viable, united and prosperous nation.

No one who claims to be a good and loyal Malaysian should dispute the need to build a strong nation of united Malaysians committed to a democratic, harmonious, just and prosperous society.

Indeed if one goes through the nine challenges outlined by the Prime Minister there is little or no room for disagreement.

Take for example the challenge to establish a matured, liberal and tolerant society, a society that is innovative and forward-looking, a society that is caring; or for that matter the challenge to ensure an economically-just society with a fair and equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation in which there is full partnership in economic progress.

What needs to be done now is for the Government under the Prime Minister's leadership to take all necessary measures needed to tackle and overcome the nine challenges facing Malaysia so that the objective of realising the ambitious target set for Malaysia to become a developed nation by the year 2020 can be met.

The Government should assess and review its pre-

sent policies to determine to what extent these policies have been able to bring about a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny.

It should also assess its efforts so far in bringing about ethnic integration which is so vital to achieving a united Malaysian nation.

There must be a serious reappraisal of the Government's nation-building efforts so far in order to identify weaknesses and shortcomings so that steps could be initiated to overcome these weaknesses and shortcomings.

Such a reappraisal should involve public participation. The setting up of the Malaysian Business Council is one way to promote discussion between the Government and the private sector on the various economic issues and problems besetting the nation.

There must be a free and frank exchange of views and ideas to ensure the effectiveness of the council. The Government must be prepared not only to consider but accept ideas and proposals which are sound and able to contribute towards making Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020.

The process of consultation between the Government and the people must continue not only in the Malaysian Business Council but also in other forums so that constructive and positive views and ideas beneficial to the nation could be considered for adoption.

Malaysia has all the potential to be a great nation and to achieve the objective of being a developed country by the year 2020.

We have all the pre-requisites to be a strong and viable nation; we have the natural resources and above all the manpower needs to build and to contribute to development. What is urgently needed is to harness the available resources and channel the energies of all the multiracial people towards tackling the nine big challenges as outlined by the Prime Minister.

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