

# PM: Greater unity by year 2020

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.— The Government is confident that national unity will further improve by 2020 when the country hopes to achieve its developed status, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said members of the National Unity Advisory Panel have an important task in strengthening the unity that already existed in the country.

Speaking at the launching of the panel's first meeting here today, Dr Mahathir said the process of uniting the people took a long time.

In Malaysia, positive changes towards unity were already evident after one generation, enhancing the belief that unity in the nation's plural society was being consolidated.

Dr Mahathir said: "There are people who say that the communities are drifting increasingly apart, but the reality is the opposite. Thirty-four years ago, some people had never interacted with people not from their race.

"But today, they are getting closer and the national language is no longer strange to some of them," he added.

National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Napsiah Omar is chairman of the panel and is assisted by her deputy Datuk

Alex Lee.

The Director-General of the National Unity Department, Datuk Wan Abdul Wahid Wan Hassan, is the secretary of the panel which has a total of 32 members from the public and private sectors.

The other members of the panel are: Datuk Abdul Ghani Gilong, Haji Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir, Datuk Amar Leonard Linggi Jugah, Datuk Prof K.J. Ratnam, Tan Sri Dr Mokhzani Abdul Rahim, Datuk Dol Ramli;

Datuk Richard Ho, Rev Dr Paul Tan Chee Ing, Royal Prof Ungku Abdul Aziz, Tan Sri G.K Rama Iyer, Tan Sri Arshad Ayub, Mr Lee Lam Thye;

Puan Sri Hafsah Nasir, Dr Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, Datuk Abdul Rahim Ramli, Datuk Mohamed Saad Endut, Datuk Hassan Yusof, Datuk Mohamed Zam Abdul Wahab;

Datuk Shamsudin Mohamed Dubi, Haji Hisham Alwee, Datuk Said Alwi Syed Nordin, Tan Sri Amar Bujang Mohamed Nor, Datuk Kamaruzzaman Shariff, Datuk Abdul Halim Datuk Abdul Rauf; and,

Datuk Abdul Rahman Nasir, Tan Sri Elyas Omar, Datuk Hassan Haji Ibrahim, Datuk Nik Abidin Nik Omar, Haji Abdul Rahman Haji Ali.