

Be concerned for country's future, says **Dr Mahathir**

JITRA: A caring government and an equally concerned society will pave the way towards the realisation of Vision 2020, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said both the government and people should always be concerned for the country's future, social progress and national development, and take measures to avert undesired incidents.

Otherwise, he said, the country would not succeed and might even be destroyed.

The Prime Minister said that if the government merely wanted to remain in power without caring about the people's welfare, it could opt for popular moves such as meeting their every de-

mand.

"The people will then continue to support us. But the question is whether whatever we do is responsible or is it the right thing or not," he said when launching the national level "Caring Malaysia" programme at the National Youth Skill Training Institute here.

Dr Mahathir cited the example of a South American country where the populist government had met demands for higher and higher wages resulting in severe inflation until its currency became "meaningless."

"These are the effects of a government which sought popularity but did not care or act responsibly.

"Its economy is in chaos and the people are suffer-

ing due to the exorbitant prices of goods," he added.

In Malaysia, Dr Mahathir said, the government at times would not entertain requests because it knew these were not good in the long run.

He said the government would rather be unpopular than to accede to demands without considering their long-term effects.

This, he said, was what a caring government was all about.