

Step up unity and understanding

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Excerpts from the translation of Datuk **Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's** speech at the opening of the Umno General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Greetings to Sabah friends

LET us welcome the Umno delegates from Sabah who are attending the assembly for the first time. Although Umno is still new in Sabah, it has played an important role in making Sabahans aware of the need for close co-operation among the various states in Malaysia, in particular, the importance of unity and understanding which need to be stepped up to meet the challenges ahead. We welcome the participation of our friends from Sabah.

Recently, our Sarawak friends did extremely well at the state elections. I wish to congratulate them and say "Well done." The Sarawak Barisan Nasional has once again been given the mandate by the people. The Barisan victory is proof that the people want development, co-operation and understanding. The Sarawak electorate has rejected racial and divisive politics. They do not want those who failed in the peninsula to pour their frustrations on Sarawak. Once again, well done Sarawak.

34 years of achievement

THIS year marks the 34th year of the Federation of Malaya, and later Malaysia, which has been governed by the Alliance and then the Barisan Nasional. This means that since independence, Umno has continued to be

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In 34 years, the nation has progressed much and now even the world has recognised that the development has been extraordinary. While many countries which gained independence after the Second World War went on the slide, Malaysia has not only progressed rapidly but also been regarded by many developing countries as a model to be followed. Umno should be proud as all this happened during her rule.

However, we should not be easily satisfied as only a thin line separates success from failure. Let us look back and analyse the reasons for the success and undertake steps to meet the objectives set out.

Before independence, we were under the rule of the British and other European powers. There were Malay states which enjoyed freedom but they had to send *bunga emas* (tribute) to Siam and China. In other words, the Malay states were never really free from foreign powers.

Don't go for self-glory

TODAY, we have achieved independence and are in a position to determine our destiny. Those who fought for independence never thought of self gain but were only concerned for the wellbeing of the nation, religion and race. Misunderstanding between leaders at that time were not due to fighting for key posts or positions but the approach taken in championing the race.

The late Datuk Onn Jaffar managed to defeat the Malayan Union but had to make way after wanting to open Umno to the non-Malays. Umno under the late Tunku Abdul Rah-

man, Tun Razak, Tun Dr Ismail, Tun Sardon and others succeeded in gaining independence and setting up a nation.

By sheer coincidence, they secured key posts in the government with a steady income and power. However, their struggles were never aimed at attaining positions and power but were for the race, religion and nation.

They did not become drunk-with power and did not use the power for self-interest.

Over the years, there emerged some ambitious people in the government. Positions in the government were not used fully to develop the country but to promote themselves. Government funds were used to gain popularity in the party in an attempt for much higher posts. The main objective is to be the Prime Minister.

A former Finance Minister once promised the Selangor State government \$3 billion and a licence to run a bank in exchange for support in a contest for a key post in the supreme council. He also gave away finance company licences to the various Malay Chambers of Commerce in every State.

On-the-spot grants meant only for the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister were also used by this Minister. The Finance Ministry was used to garner support in his quest for the post.

The bad practice of this former Minister should

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be despised by all but, sadly, there are still those in the government and party leaders who still prefer this approach.

Those who became rich because of the New Economic Policy used their money to buy influence and a place in the party at branch and division levels. Similarly, those holding positions in government-owned companies also used their resources to gain support and position. The corrupt practice resulted in Umno being declared illegal by the court.

Thankfully, there are still many people who love the party and Umno has been revived.

Depending on non-Muslims

ISLAM is no ordinary religion. It is **Ad-~~e~~n**, a way of life. However, Muslims are always taught the importance of the after-life while teachers who talk about attaining good life on earth are often labelled **unIslamic**. To them, **Ad-~~e~~n** only means in preparation for death.

Because of this, Muslims become a weak and backward community. A rich Muslim State has to get help from a non-Muslim country when attacked. Neighbouring states had to co-operate with a non-Muslim country for fear of being attacked.

The aggressor was later defeated. Because of this war, rich Muslim states become poor and have to depend on the non-Muslim country.

Threat of new philosophy

THIS year saw the launching of the National Development Policy to replace the New Economic Policy. If the NEP had not fully met its objectives, neither the policy nor the government is to be blamed. The total accumulated wealth over the last 20 years may have resulted in 30 per cent bumiputra share of the economy if not for inefficiency and dishonesty.

TURN TO PAGE 21

Fight intervention -with wealth

FROM PAGE 19

The government plans to form a Bumiputra Commercial and Industrial Community (BCIC) where competent bumiputras will be assisted. However, they must not rely only on the government but must also be able to compete with the others.

The west is promoting a new philosophy where they have the right to intervene in the affairs of other countries if they feel a country is undemocratic, neglect human rights, curtail the press or right of speech or attri-

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bute to the pollution of the environment. This philosophy threatens the independence of small nations.

Intervention by foreign powers comes in many forms, namely trade sanctions and aid, sending of troops to apprehend leaders deemed as guilty. The weaker the nation, the

more threatened their independence becomes.

If Malaysia wishes to defend her independence, the country must be strong. This does not necessarily mean strong mili-

tarily but strong in terms of economic wealth and the ability to develop the nation.

Growth and Vision 2020

WE have formed the 2020 vision aimed at making Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020. To achieve this, we need an economic growth of seven per cent annually or double every 10 years.

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This means that by 2020, the economy will be eight times bigger than currently. This is not impossible as the economic

growth recorded nearly seven per cent over the 1970s and 80s.

However, vision 2020 can expect some prob-

lems if the seven per cent economic growth annually does not include bumiputra share of a similar quantum. Surely the bumiputras will be disappointed if they remain poor and backward in a developed nation.

This will not happen if the Malays understand the importance of efforts to improve themselves and not to be influenced by groups against Vision 2020.