

# Mahathir

## We can

17 APR 1992  
meet

target

## earlier

MALACCA: Malaysia can achieve developed nation status earlier than 2020 if its growth rate is maintained at the present 8.5 per cent, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said the country must push forward with the present economic growth during the early years of the Vision 2020 programme in order to meet the target.

"This is because when a country progresses rapidly, the rate of growth will drop as it becomes more developed.

"Developed countries generally have lower growth rates than developing countries," he added.

He said some regions in the country were already developing at a faster pace than others.

"For example, Malacca's average per capita income will be higher than the national average by the year 2010 or 2005," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's economic growth was already regarded as the highest in the world, according to a recent World Bank report.

He said the World Bank regarded Malaysia as a model developing country much sought after by foreign investors.

Dr Mahathir said the amount of foreign capital invested in the country doubled each year over the past five years.

Later in Johor Baru, he said unity and undivided support for the Government helped Malaysia to attain its record economic growth rate.

The Prime Minister said the strong backing which the Government received from various races also helped the country avoid the economic slowdown which hit the United States, Japan and Britain.

"But we could fall one day if there is disunity in Umno, which is the backbone of the Barisan Nasional machinery," he told Umno division leaders.

Dr Mahathir said Umno members must remember that the party enjoyed broad-based support from all races because of its moderate attitude and willingness to allow other races to practice their religion freely.

Speaking to newsmen after officiating a \$1 billion polypropylene plant in Pasir Gudang, Dr Mahathir said he had discussed issues pertaining to restrictions on Malaysian vehicles entering Singapore with his Singapore counterpart Goh Chok Tong.

"Mr Goh and I discussed this problem and we agreed that decisions by one country which affect the people on the other side should be jointly discussed by both governments in future before implementation," he said.