

Why developed

status vital

Ⓟ NSI - 2 AUG 1992

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Malaysia should become a developed nation to help it react effectively to the strong influence wielded internationally by powerful Western nations. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today.

He said the Western bloc was controlling global affairs with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in many countries.

"We have seen how powerful Western countries have acted against weaker nations without regard for their sovereignty.

"In view of this it is of paramount importance that we become a developed nation. To achieve this we have to further strengthen our economy.

"This can be achieved only if all the races in the country continue to be united, work hard and live in harmony," he said at the opening of the 21st Gerakan annual delegates' conference at the Federal Hotel here today.

He said only by becoming a fully developed nation would Malaysia be respected and held in high esteem.

Malaysia, he said, had all the ingredients to become a fully developed nation. It was in a better position to become developed as it was rich in natural resources including petroleum.

"Our country is united although it is multi-racial and there is political stability. We have an efficient administration. We have other positive elements such as an efficient workforce which is willing to learn."

On the Vision 2020 concept, he said it required the support of all Malaysians.

"It is not aimed for the benefit of any single community but for all Malaysians whether they be Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazan, Iban, Melanau, Murut or others."

Dr Mahathir said the country at present not only enjoyed peace and stability but also was successful economically.

"Malaysia is among the countries in the world which is experiencing rapid economic development and this growth is projected to remain high."

Malaysia's success in managing its economy efficiently was recognised by various international bodies and it had become a model for other developing nations, he said.

"The Barisan Nasional Government has proven that it is only the coalition that can ensure continued success and prosperity for the nation.

"This is because the coalition adopted a moderate approach and always gave due importance to the welfare of all the communities."

Dr Mahathir said the people realised the futility of supporting the opposition.

The two opposition States, he said, experienced a weak economy at a time when the country as a whole was enjoying an economic boom.

Dr Mahathir also said he was happy to note that the MCA representatives headed by party president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik formed the largest delegation to the conference.