

# PM: Don't rely on political strength

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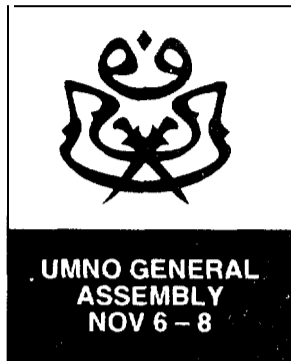
THE Prime Minister likened the political strength of the Malays to that of a walking stick, saying that they cannot depend on it forever.

Like the body that becomes weak after using a walking stick over a long period, the Malay race will also become weak and helpless if it depends purely on political strength, **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir** said.

The Malays must make use of their political strength to build resilience in other areas like business, education, industry and technology.

Speaking in his keynote address, Dr Mahathir said the Malays and Bumiputeras were lucky because they were strong politically and therefore, could protect their interests.

The walking stick should be used to overcome temporary weaknesses. After recovery, the walking stick should be removed and they



should stand on their own feet, he said.

He spoke of the need for Malay and Bumiputera businessmen to look into new ventures and not be afraid to take risks.

'Should our business remain small because we are afraid of the risks? Unfortunately for us, in this world of giants, small businesses may not last long.

Whether we like it or not, Bumiputeras need to venture into big businesses and industries if we are to contribute towards rectifying the imbalance between Bumiputeras and non-Bumiputeras.

'The risks can be reduced if one is patient and conducts detailed studies. Working as a paid employee may help one to gather information and experience. The purchase of shares in companies where one is employed may also help.'

There were many fields of business and it was essential that Bumiputeras involved themselves in these businesses on a large scale and in an orderly and systematic manner.

**Nobody should feel discouraged that there were already big companies in any particular field.**

'We should consider other fields which are no less important in a sophisticated economy. It is not wise to

concentrate on businesses in which there are already many Bumiouter participants.

'As I have said, not all businesses are controlled by big companies. Through a franchise system, individual traders with sufficient capital can own and manage their own shop. Even today, petrol stations are owned by individuals through franchise. Such franchised businesses can be applied to other areas.'

He said "think big" was a proper slogan today. But such thinking must be accompanied by big capital, trustworthiness, management expertise and experience which would inspire confidence among customers and financial institutions.

'An entrepreneur used to apply for one taxi licence but today, applications for 100 licences can be said to have absorbed the culture of 'think big,' he added.