

PM: HAVE FAITH IN OUR ABILITY

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Prime Minister is confident Malaysians have the ability and drive to achieve the Government's vision of a developed nation.

In a National Day message over RTM last night, he said the country had over the past 35 years proved to the world a multiracial nation could achieve progress and success if its people were hardworking, disciplined and showed respect for one another.

"The path towards 2020 is certainly not easy and will be full of challenges. Each step that we take will be met with all kinds of obstacles," he said.

"Nevertheless, we must have faith in our ability to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020. With independence we have succeeded in overcoming many barriers and managed to equip ourselves with knowledge and skills we never had before.

"By increasing our effort and **determination**, God-willing, our vision will become a reality."

Reflecting on the significance of National Day, the Prime Minister said Malaysians had every reason to be proud, happy and grateful for the prosperity, stability, peace and harmony they enjoyed.

But he cautioned Malaysians they must continue to be wary and to strive hard. He said if Malaysians did not forge ahead, they would remain a poor nation that would not be able to act freely as it was too dependent on the help and goodwill of others.

"If this happens our independence, of which we are so proud of, will no longer be meaningful."

Dr Mahathir said in the drive to become a developed nation, there must be political stability, unity and sustainable economic growth.

"We must continue to co-operate **and** be united.

We must also be wary of others who are out to disrupt unity among the races."

He noted that the National Day celebrations would enable the people to reflect on the history and struggle for independence and enlighten them on the importance of a life free from colonialism.

"We must always remember that colonialism can appear in other forms," he said.

As an independent nation, he added, Malaysia had to guard its dignity and sovereignty.

"To protect our **dignity** and sovereignty as a truly independent country, we must turn Malaysia into a developed nation, comparable to other developed countries," he said.

"We have been successful in developing the country rapidly because we have a Government which is sensitive to the needs of the people," he said.