

All parties must play their roles, says

# Facing challenges

PM in New Year message

## es of 1993

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was confident the country would be able to face its challenges in 1993 and the years beyond if all parties played their roles, carried out their responsibilities effectively and strove hard.

The Prime Minister said the country had in past years proven its ability to weather all kinds of challenges. "There is no reason why we cannot overcome the challenges in 1993," he said.

In his New Year message to the nation over Radio and Television Malaysia here, the Prime Minister reminded the people that the nation's political stability was crucial to the country's development efforts.

The Prime Minister said: "Without political stability, we will not be able to achieve the developed nation status which we envision."

"Hence, it is hoped that Malaysians will maintain the existing harmony and unity so that the country will continue to progress and prosper. We should learn from the experiences of several countries faced with racial conflicts.

"Such racial conflicts not only have made life more difficult for their citizens but have proven impossible to contain once they occur. Therefore, let us strengthen our determination to maintain the unity and racial harmony that we now enjoy."

He said that in a world where war, conflicts and famine still plagued different parts of the globe, the peace and stability that the country enjoyed were indeed blessings which should be appreciated.

He said: "While economies the world over have deteriorated, we on the other hand continue to prosper and flourish."

"Hence, we ought to be even more grateful for the achievement and the situation we experienced in the whole of 1992 which by God's will are the results of the moderation and relentless efforts of the multi-racial people of the country."

"The country's stability is the result of the close cooperation among all the races who have always worked with great determi-

nation to ensure that harmony and unity among the races are safeguarded.

"The key to the unity that we are so proud of is the spirit of tolerance and the mutual respect we have for one another."

"With such unity and close co-operation among the races, we have successfully created a nation which is stable politically, economically and socially."

Dr Mahathir said for the past five consecutive years, Malaysia had achieved a rapid rate of economic growth. This high growth rate has enabled the country to continue to provide various facilities for the comfort of the people.

The people now have a higher standard of living. Malaysians not only have access to the basic necessities but also enjoy other amenities that are only found in developed countries.

Higher incomes have also increased the purchasing power of Malaysians.

These are among the benefits now enjoyed as a result of a high economic growth.

He said: "If in the past many people predicted that Malaysia, with its multi-racial population and with its need to redistribute wealth among the races, will experience regression and instability, today it is clear that all these predictions are baseless."

"On the contrary, the country has proven that our social engineering process of restructuring society not only does not jeopardise economic growth but a high growth rate could still be achieved in a climate of peace and stability."

"This success has made many countries regard Malaysia as a model of development in a democratic and pluralistic society."

"While we can be proud of our economic achievements, we should also be cautious because we may not be able to sustain this high economic growth."

"After five consecutive years of rapid growth the country's economy is expected to undergo a process of consolidation."

"Although there are early signs indicating that a recovery is in the making, especially in Japan and the USA, most economies of the

industrialised countries are still ailing."

He said the Government anticipated that Malaysia's economy would grow by about eight per cent next year compared with 8.5 per cent this year. Although this is still an encouraging rate, Malaysians can no longer take for granted that the economic growth will always be high, he said.

"Accordingly, the Government needs the co-operation of all to ensure that the country's economy is still capable of registering this required rate of growth."

"This is important as our development and progress are dependent on a healthy and continuous economic expansion."

"The responsibility of ensuring that the economy continues to expand is not the responsibility of the Government alone. It is the task and responsibility of all Malaysians."

"Malaysians can play their role by being thrifty and not be lavish in their spending in our efforts to curb inflation."

He said workers could contribute by increasing their productivity and efficiency while not making unreasonable demands for pay increases. Any wage increase must be commensurate with an increase in productivity.

Wage increases not accompanied by higher productivity will only result in Malaysian products becoming uncompetitive. When this happens, the losers, apart from employers and the country, will be the workers themselves.

Exporters for their part should be more aggressive in making the necessary adjustments to seize whatever opportunities which are made available by the changes in the international economic and political scenario. They should also be bold enough to penetrate new markets and not to limit themselves only to the traditional ones in the effort to widen the markets for our goods.

He also advised the people to instil good values such as hard work and integrity and adhere strongly to discipline, for good discipline is among the important factors which can enable the country to develop and prosper.