

ANOTHER GOOD YEAR AHEAD

By WONG CHUN WAI

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KUALA LUMPUR: Another good year is in store for 1994 if present conditions prevail, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Unless something extraordinary happens, we believe 1994 will see good economic growth and the country continuing to enjoy peace," he said yesterday at Angkasapuri after recording his New Year message.

He expected the electronics sector to be the thrust of the country's exports.

Predicting boom times ahead, the Prime Minister said the conditions were further spurred by the economy in the United States which has started to improve. This would have an impact on the country's performance.

"The three per cent growth rate in the United States is very big because of its 250 million population and high per capita incomes," he said.

Malaysia, he said, could hope to export more electronic products there, adding that he also expected Japan's economic standing, in its third year of slowdown, to improve.

Dr Mahathir, however, said he had little confidence generally in the performance of the European countries.

This year has been good to most Malaysians with the bullish Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange's composite index shooting past the 1,200-point psychological barrier.

On what he hoped to achieve next year, Dr Mahathir replied: "It will be another step towards achieving Vision 2020."

He said it would be a big step because the desire to achieve an average economic growth of seven per cent for 30 years called for a growth much higher than the present.

However, Dr Mahathir cautioned the people that while 1993 had gone on smoothly, they should not get carried away with the good fortune.

"We must remember tragedies such as the condominium collapse and floods.

While we rejoice, we must not forget that tragedy can strike anytime," he added.

On the international front, he said Malaysia was still not satisfied with the attitude of the United Nations although the United States had recently voted with smaller nations for the lifting of the arms embargo for Bosnians to defend themselves.

On developments in the Middle East, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was not ready to

have diplomatic relations with Israel.

He said while Israel insisted the Palestinians to stop the use of terrorism, it had not given up state terrorism.

Dr Mahathir was taken on a tour of Angkasapuri.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by Datuk Paduka Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, later launched the new names for RTM's TV1 (*Saluran Perdana*) and TV2 (*Saluran Emas*).