

Stability the result of co-operation, com

# Dr M: BN has

By S. Jayakrishnan

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — The Barisan Nasional has proven its capability in ensuring that the country can be made stable, prosperous and dynamic, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said this achievement was the result of the stability, co-operation and compromise as well as the family spirit nurtured among the Barisan Nasional coalition parties.

Dr Mahathir, in his message in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Barisan Nasional tomorrow, said this tradition, inherited from its past leaders, had become part of the culture, value and lifestyle of Malaysians since independence.

He paid tribute to the nation's first Prime Minister, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman or *Bapa Malaysia* as he was fondly known, and to the contributions of past leaders including Tun Tan Siew Sin, Tun V.T. Sambanthan, Tun Abdul Razak, Tun Hussein Onn and various other leaders who, he said, the nation should remember on this historic occasion.

Dr Mahathir added that their sacrifices for the nation would long be remembered and the people should be grateful to God for the country's development and economic success.

"As a result of the Government remaining unchanged over the years, its policies have also remained unchanged.

"What the BN has done is to improve its policies and introduce new ideas. As a result of the stability, foreign and local investors were unperturbed over the future of their investments.

"This has contributed towards the rapid development of the economy. On the other hand even the

most developed countries will experience recession when their Governments change frequently."

He said in Malaysia even the Opposition was accommodated and said there had been no occasion when Parliament did not have Opposition representation.

Dr Mahathir said this was clear proof that under the BN Government democracy was functioning in a healthy manner. Unfortunately, however, Opposition parties rarely criticised in a constructive manner.

He also congratulated the various BN coalition parties and thanked them for their support for the BN and its leadership.

Outlining the BN's formation Dr Mahathir added that the BN was a legacy of the binding ties built before the country's independence between Umno, MCA and the MIC in the struggle for independence and nationalism.

He said the Alliance represented a coalition party representing the three major races in the peninsula. The coalition was later enlarged to accommodate parties in Sabah and Sarawak until it reflected the hopes and aspirations of all races and ethnic groups in Malaysian society.

Dr Mahathir said to allow all parties to join the Government, Opposition parties were accepted together with the coalition partners in a much larger coalition which was called the Barisan Nasional.

The BN, which was formed on June 1, 1974, succeeded in uniting the various races following the outbreak of racial riots in 1969.

Dr Mahathir said the BN's formation following the racial violence had created a new awareness among Malaysians and there was a greater sense of tolerance.

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promise among coalition parties

# proven itself

# Racial politics reduced under Barisan leadership, says Dr M

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"The BN became a symbol of the people's enthusiasm and maturity. The BN's victory in each election proves that the people accept the concept of co-operation within the BN."

He said under the BN leadership, racial politics was minimised and sensitive matters were discussed and resolved privately. As such the threat of racial conflicts no longer threatened the stability of the country.

"On the other hand there is greater and serious focus on the development of the people and a fair distribution of wealth. Poverty has also been reduced while the economy has grown rapidly."

Dr Mahathir added that the politics practised by the BN was that of moderation and all races and parties shared equal position in the BN's supreme council.

"Umno, owing to its size, is the core in ensuring that the BN is not easily fragmented. However, Umno also respects the opinions of other smaller parties, just as they respect each other."

"With this consensus approach, the interests of smaller parties and races are not ignored."

He said even though the BN was a coalition party it acted in an ethical manner as component parties were not allowed to compete with each other during elections.

On the other hand, candidates from component parties stood on the BN platform and were supported by all component party members.

Dr Mahathir said as the BN was represented as a coalition before an election it was not weak like other coalition parties which did not have enough seats to form the Government.

Moreover, he added, such coalition parties were easily overthrown with the withdrawal of just one partner while in the case of the BN the withdrawal of any component party would not jeopardise the BN's majority and it could still form the Government. This was the uniqueness of the BN.

Dr Mahathir said the MPs in Parliament could not

ernment due to its two-thirds majority and as such the Government could focus its attention towards development without adverse criticism from outside or within the party.

He cited the example of the withdrawal of the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) from the BN which did not succeed in toppling the BN even during the election.

BN secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat in his message said the country's political stability, impressive economic performance, racial harmony and its excellence in every field had enabled the country's leaders and the nation to play a more effective role in the international arena.

He said the opinion of Malaysians on various international issues was respected as it was regarded as envisioning the hopes and aspirations of the Third World and the people of developing countries.

Mohamed added that what was occurring in Bosnia-Herzegovina, West Asia, Africa and particularly in Rwanda was an important lesson to Malaysia as a democratic country of different races striving to seek industrialised status.

"Our survival in future will depend on ourselves. The United Nations was not able to solve the problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia or assist the people of Rwanda."

"Our future as a sovereign and independent nation, as well as a multi-racial, democratic country will depend on our determination, aspirations and resilience."

Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib, who is the celebrations organising committee chairman, said the BN had achieved much success over the past 20 years and that the nation was respected for its economic and social success as a multi-racial country.

He said under the leadership of Dr Mahathir the BN would continue to progress and attain even greater success and in the process become a model power-sharing pact in the international