

Dr M: Barisan protects interests of all

KUALA LUMPUR: The Barisan Nasional, which uses consensus in making decisions, has ensured that the interests of all, including minority parties or races, are not neglected.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Barisan's politics of moderation had enabled all component parties to have equal position in the ruling coalition.

"Umno, because of its size, is made the pillar to ensure Barisan is united. But Umno also respects the opinions of other minority parties just like other component members," he said in a message in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of

Barisan today.

Dr Mahathir, who is the Barisan chairman, said the coalition had proven that it was capable of leading the people and country towards the aspiration of making Malaysia into a stable, prosperous and dynamic country.

"This achievement is the result of unity, co-operation and compromise as well as prevailing family spirit among component members. This tradition has been entrenched until it became our culture and values ever since pre-independence."

He also said the establishment of the Barisan after the 1969 racial riot was a reflection

of the need for racial sensitivities among Malaysians.

"Since that date, Malaysians' tolerance towards each other has continued to grow.

"Barisan symbolises the spirit and maturity of the people. Barisan's victory in every general election proved the people's acceptance of the coalition's concept of co-operation," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the two-thirds majority enjoyed by the Barisan government had ensured that its position would not be easily threatened.

He said the Government also allowed the presence of opposi-

tion parties, adding that it was a clear indication that democracy is of essence under Barisan's rule.

The Prime Minister paid tribute to first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj as the founder of multi-racial co-operation.

"Tun Tan Siew Sin, Tun V.T.Sambanthan, together with Tun Abdul Razak (Hussein) and Tun Dr Ismail (Abdul Rahman) as well as other leaders should be respected and remembered on this day."

Barisan secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat in his message reminded the people that the survival of the country

in its multi-racialism was in their hands.

The *Barisan Nasional* theme song will be heard for the first time tonight as part of the 20th anniversary celebrations.

The song is simply titled *Barisan Nasional*.

The song was composed by Ahmad Dassilah while the lyrics were written by Madzhi Johari.

Dr Mahathir, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and leaders of other component parties are expected to attend the gathering.