

# Dr M confident Barisan Nasional will continue to rule till 2020 and beyond

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Barisan Nasional celebrated its 20th anniversary tonight with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad expressing full confidence that the coalition, with its magnificent track record, will continue to be in power in the years to come till 2020 and beyond.

Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, expressed the optimism before an estimated 20,000-strong crowd which filled the entire Data-

ran Merdeka, the venue where the coalition was launched by the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, the country's second Prime Minister, in 1974.

"With the Barisan, we will march ahead till we achieve our 2020 aspirations. And I am confident that with the support of the people, especially those younger ones in the crowd tonight, that our country will continue to be ruled by Barisan," he said to loud applause in his one-

hour speech.

Dr Mahathir said the BN and its predecessor, the Alliance, had been in power for 37 years and had done a lot to gain the confidence of the people.

"Our concept has always been simple but remarkable in the eyes of the world."

He said much of it was due to the power-sharing and consensus approach which had been the hallmark of the 14-party coalition, and he paid tribute to

the founder members and his predecessors like Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Razak, Tun Tan Siew Sin and Tun V.T. Sambanthan.

Dr Mahathir said the BN's democratic government had brought about peace, harmony, success and prosperity to the nation.

He said there was no other political coalition in the world with 14 multi-racial component parties harmoniously governing a country.

Describing the mammoth gathering as one of the products of a peaceful country, he said it was the BN that had helped in shaping it into a united nation.

"Unlike many other developed countries, a gathering of this nature is not possible because their people feel insecure.

"But, in Malaysia, the BN's concept of ruling the

□ PLEASE TURN TO  
PAGE 2, COL 1

## Making the nation prosper

□ FROM PAGE ONE

country has brought people from various ethnic backgrounds to live and work together as Malaysians.

"In Bosnia, Ireland, Rwanda and other parts of the world, a gathering of this size in the night is unthinkable.

"In Malaysia, we can assemble in peace and harmony and do not have to worry about security."

Beginning with the Alliance and then the Barisan, the country had prospered since independence due to the rapid pace of industrialisation, he said.

"We have always worked hard to ensure our contin-

ued prosperity so that our country will have a bigger economic cake for all to share.

"Our policy is not simply to take from the rich and give to the poor, but the basis of it all is to develop the country and make it prosper," he said, citing the increase in the country's per capita income from US\$730 in 1970 to US\$3,300 (RM8,410) today.

"Did you think we could have achieved this if we were at war with each other?"

Earlier, Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib, who is organising chairman of the anniversary celebration, said the BN needed to re-

view its performance from time to time and adopt new approaches in its services to sustain the confidence of the people.

Muhammad, who is one of Umno's vice presidents, said the coalition should continue to enhance its management capability by introducing new methods in administering the country.

"We must make the people happy with the BN and make them feel that they need our services," he said.

However, Muhammad said, this would not be achieved if BN members, especially the younger generations, had conflicting visions and views with the leadership.

He urged BN members to serve the people well to ensure their continued support for the coalition.

Earlier on arrival at Data-ran Merdeka, Dr Mahathir was greeted by the beatings of *kompang* and *rebani ubi* as well as a lion dance troupe.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Ministers, Menteri Besar, Chief Ministers and other Barisan leaders.

The crowd later listened to excerpts of speeches made by three former Prime Ministers — Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Hussein Onn — and Dr Mahathir.