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New Year-Message

BN LEADERS SAY 1997 PROMISES TO BE A BETTER YEAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 31 (Bernama) -- MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said Malaysians must remain positive and be wary of efforts that may thwart national development and affect political stability.

He said that as a Barisan Nasional component party, the MCA would continue to play its role in the government and national development, especially in promoting closer cooperation between the Chinese and the other communities in fields that could benefit the people.

The MCA also seeks to help the country train more people of calibre and the ability to compete, he said in his New Year message.

Towards this end, it will give priority to education, especially through the Tunku Abdul Rahman College development project, he added.

Dr Ling, who is Transport Minister, said unity and cooperation among the various communities must be stepped to allow problems and challenges to be overcome through the collective energy and wisdom.

He said the wise and liberal policies implemented by the government have brought the the country to a level of development that is commendable.

MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, in wishing Malaysians a Happy New Year, called on them to prepare themselves to face the challenges of the information technology (IT) age.

Saying that 1997 promises to be an even better year, he urged Malaysians, especially the Indian community, to strive to become "mind workers" and be a dynamic and creative society.

The Works Minister said they should be able to fit into the Malaysian society of the year 2020.

"In this IT age, Malaysian Indians could not be like before -- a community of manual workers. IT will control everything and it will shape our future," he said in his message.

Samy Vellu said the country is now on the threshold of an exciting new century which would be full of changes and challenges.

Malaysia, he added, is on a journey towards a new era of being an economically powerful and very modern nation under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"On the outset of the new year, I would like to urge the Malaysian Indians to join the other communities in this journey and to become equal partners in establishing a brighter and better future for themselves," said Samy Vellu.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, in his New Year message, urged Malaysians to redouble their efforts if the country's economic success was to be sustained into the future.

"We need to work, train and save even harder. We have to continue to maintain even higher levels of discipline, honesty and commitment at our work places," he said.

The Primary Industries Minister said the people would have to be even innovative, creative, flexible and adaptable.

Dr Lim said 1996 has once again been another good year for Malaysia and Malaysians with the country's economy expected to register a real Gross Domestic Product growth of 8.2 per cent this year.

"Aside from rising per capita incomes, Malaysians continue to enjoy full employment, with the unemployment rate declining from the already low rate of 2.8 per cent last year to a further low of 2.6 per cent this year.

"The overall economic scenario thus far is healthy and bright, thanks

to the hard work put in by all Malaysians and the sound management of the economy by the government," he said.

However, the minister reminded the people that "success does not come easily and to sustain success is even harder". --BERNAMA

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