

BERNAMA NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL EXTRACT

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The Star notes that there are many people we should thank for making Malaysia's happier, more tolerant, progressive and prosperous society.

"Heading the list undoubtedly should be Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who has worked hard for 15 years to bring greater development and industrial advancement. He has not stopping working."

The paper said Dr.Mahathir's efforts have resulted in more than eight years of unprecedented economic growth and had turned Malaysia from an export of primary commodities to that of manufactured goods.

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BUSINESS TIMES in its editorial says that after the new year celebration, comes the time to get down to serious business, the start of a new year.

The countdown shows three years to a new millenium and 23 years to Malaysia's target of becoming a developed nation.

Economially, Malaysia has remained buoyant, with an abundance of opportunities to create wealth. The nation has therefore been able to forge ahead in undertaking some of the biggest projects ever.

These include the construction of the final stages of the mammoth Kuala Lumpur city centre project, the construction of the regions's most modern airport in the south of KL, the prestigious Multimedia Super-corridor project and the introduction of light rail transit system in the capital city.

The overall physical progress the nation has made, however, has not been without a price. -- more

"Never before has Kuala Lumpur's roads been so choked as waves of development play havoc with traffic systems and tipper-trucks and tower cranes fill the skyline.

"Elsewhere, many point fingers at the massive development of hill and forest areas as the principal cause for the increasing incidence of flash floods".

The business daily notes that by and large, however it has been accepted that a majority of these projects are for future convenience and though difficult, the price has to be paid now.

On politics the daily said Malaysia has remained as stable as ever and the situation is expected to continue.

The Umno political party emerged triumphant from the general elections and although the contest for the posts were somewhat intense, party members quickly closed ranks.

Umno emerged stronger when its once bitter foe, the Semangat 46 party, was dissolved with all its members deciding to rejoin Umno for the sake of Malay unity. -- move

In the international arena, Business Times said the appointment of Tan Sri Razali Ismail as chairman of the United Nations General Assembly in 1996 was yet another recognition of the country's growing reputation.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was as busy as ever in 1996, visiting countries far and wide, from war torn Bosnia-Herzegovina and underdeveloped Republic of Guinea to modern Japan and the US.

As the nation rejoices over the release of the Malaysian ambassaor to Peru, the year 1996 will also be remembered sadly for several misfortunes.

"Among others, we grief with the people of Sabah who lost their loved ones and property in the recent strom." -- more

BERITA HARIAN says in his new year message Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has called on the people to adjust their living style in line with the present era of information technology.

"If we study the content of his message Dr Mahathir wants us, the rakyat, to change the way of thinking and conduct activities in line with the changing time guided by relevant information," says the Malay daily.

Berita Harian says today human beings make decisions faster as they obtain relevant information easily.

Through computer at our bedroom we can obtain necessary relevant information and come at a decision speedily.

Previously it took a long time to gather and collate relevant information as they were scattered the worldwide.

"Internet solved the problem", says the Malay daily.

Through internet we can search for information quickly in the comfort of our living room.

Berita Harian cautions that if Malaysians are reluctant to use such information channel the nation will left behind.

As such the Malay daily calls on Malaysians of all walks of life to pay

heed to the Prime Minister's advice on the changing needs demanded by the information technology era.

UTUSAN MALAYSIA also advised Malaysians of all walks life to pay heed to the Prime Minister's new year message particularly adjusting their life style and thinking in line with the information technology era.

The Malay daily says Malaysia should transform and to achieve it the rakyat of Malaysia should be prepared to equip with sophisticated knowledge.

"Knowledge is power and those Malaysians who failed to acquire knowledge will be left behind".

Utusan agrees with the Prime Minister that the rakyat have no choice as the era of information technology will force them to change their living style, working methods and thinking.

The daily points out the information technology will change radically Malaysia's economic and social environment.

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