

31/08/1997

PM: Everyone must be willing to sacrifice

ah Chor Sooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Every race in Malaysia must be willing to sacrifice some of their rights, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"Everyone is claiming for the same rights but they will not be able to get all of them," he said when opening the 44th MCA annual general assembly.

"If we are willing to sacrifice and realise that others too will have to sacrifice in order that the country enjoys peace and stability ... in an absolute sense, we will get all that we are claiming for."

In other words, Dr Mahathir said it was better to get a small portion of a big cake than to get all of a tiny one.

"This is what is happening in Malaysia. Because we work together we are able to develop this country to such an extent that our portion is much bigger than the whole of a small disputed piece."

He said although Malaysia was multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious, it did not focus on its differences.

In this sense, he said, Malaysians were fortunate.

"We focus instead on our similarities and use them as best as we can for the good of ourselves and the country."

Some countries, Dr Mahathir said, focused on the importance of individual races and neglected the importance of the country as a whole.

Because of this, he said, racial riots often occurred and this adversely affected the country's development.

"No one wins in these riots. On the other hand, what is fought for will be reduced to ashes ... this is of no use to anyone, the winner or the loser."

Dr Mahathir said the fate of such countries should serve as a lesson to Malaysia.

To achieve the country's aspirations and safeguard the future of the nation's youths, the Prime Minister said: "We should always remind ourselves and the country's youths the importance of tolerance, sensitivity and respect among the races.

"Malaysians should also increase their sense of patriotism and efforts to propel the country to developed nation status."

Dr Mahathir said he was happy that Malaysians were living together in peace.

"I am also happy with the country's continued development. We hope there will be peace and stability not just during this generation, but in future generations right up to the next millennium."

(END)