

CAUSE FOR JOY

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PM: Steps taken to tackle economic woes showing results

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad says the country is gradually recovering from the economic crisis which hit Malaysia more than a year ago.

The Prime Minister said solid support by the people towards the steps taken by the Government to overcome the economic difficulties, caused by attacks on the currency and share market, was now showing results.

"The situation in our country is generally far better than before. Today, Malaysian Christians can look forward to celebrating Christmas joyously," he said in a Christmas message here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said the culture of Malaysians visiting each other during festive seasons had strengthened ties among people of different races and religions as well as maintaining peace and prosperity in the country.

"We are fortunate and should be thankful that the tolerance that we have practised has successfully strengthened and united the people and that the crisis and attempts to spark riots did not create disharmony among us.

"We should learn the lessons in other countries where the economic difficulties have resulted in clashes among the people who practised different religions.

"It is obviously clear that efforts to bridge the development gap between races have effectively minimised potential racial tensions when crisis hits a nation," he added.

Works Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, in his Christmas message, said Malaysian Christians could celebrate Christmas with relief.

"With full economic recovery on the way, Malaysians can be happy in celebrating this year's Christmas," he said in his Yuletide message.

However, he reminded them to continue to be thrifty "as we are not out of the woods yet."

Samy Vellu said Malaysians had displayed strong determination, commitment and co-operation to help the Government kick-start the economy.

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Samy: Proof is in report

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"The facts (of an economic recovery) are already there," he said, citing a recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on the status of the Malaysian economy.

The IMF had said the Malaysian financial markets appeared to have stabilised while consumer demand was showing signs of improvement.

Samy Vellu said the positive IMF report on Malaysia was attributed to the prudent economic management and policies of the Prime Minister.

"It is proof to the world that the recent economic measures are bearing fruit," he added.