

# Success is -in **your hands**, PM tells people

By MUGUNTAN VANAR and RUBEN SARIO

KOTA KINABALU: The success of government measures towards economic recovery lies in the hands of the people, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"It is the people who can determine that whatever we want to do will succeed. The Government has some plans and we hope for the people's solid support," the Prime Minister said.

He was elaborating on his statement at a meet-the-people gathering at the Likas sports complex where he told Malaysians to have confidence in the measures taken even if some of these might cause apprehension among the people.

He said some people might wonder whether some of the drastic measures would work.

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"But have faith; whatever action we take has been well-thought first."

Asked at a press conference before he left for Kuala Lumpur what he meant by drastic measures, Dr Mahathir said some of the plans formulated by the Government might not be expected by the people.

"I say this because sometimes the Government has to make decisions that may be a shock to the people," he said.

The Prime Minister added that while such plans may not be implemented, "we have to get the people's mind ready."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia would not need the intervention of the International Monetary Fund if the Government had the support of the people for its economic recovery plans such as those formulated by the National Economic Action Council

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He explained that government policies for the past 40 years had worked well in bringing progress to the nation and bridging the economic gap between bumiputras and non-bumiputras.

He said compared to other countries, Malaysia had been able to keep retrenchment to a minimum because it created more than ample jobs that were once taken up by foreigners and could now be filled by Malaysians.

"Our policies for progress were our own. We did not copy from others," he said.

Asking the people not to stop spending but instead spend wisely, he said the people's sacrifice could include buying locally-made goods, going for domestic holidays and sending their children to local universities.

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## PM: Nothing wrong in wanting to develop the nation

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He said there was nothing wrong in Malaysia being ambitious in its development plans, adding that big projects like the KL International Airport were undertaken with "our own resources and our own money."

Dr Mahathir said that even if Malaysia borrowed money for development purposes, the loans were always repaid.

Although some foreigners had denied that there was a conspiracy to impede Malaysia's progress, the fact remained that their attack on the ringgit triggered the economic slowdown, he said.

"Now they say they want the prime Minister changed," he said in explaining that the economies of other Asian countries which changed leaders had not improved.

present at the gathering were Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Sabah Cabinet members as well as former deputy Prime minister Tun Ghafar Baba and other federal leaders.