

PM: Shrinking economy must not widen disparity ¹⁹

By **MERGAWATI ZULFAKAR**

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has warned that the shrinking economic cake shared by the country's multiracial society must not lead to wider disparity between the races.

"I don't know whether it is the plan of outside forces so that distribution of wealth can't

be done fairly anymore but such disparity may lead to chaotic situations like what had happened in other countries," he said when opening the Malay Contractors Association annual general meeting here.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians had gained from the New Economic Policy under which the Government ensured that the economic cake was dis-

tributed fairly. ^{توزيعاً عادلاً}

"This is why when we are facing the current economic problems, there are no riots. But if the country was still like it was before 1969, I am sure it would have caused racial riots," he said.

Dr Mahathir said although the NEP had ended, its principles were continued for the country's growth and progress.

He said outside forces had deliberately stunted the growth of the country's economy.

"We must view this as a challenge. Can we continue with such a policy although the cake is now smaller?

"It will depend on us. The Government is confident of resolving the problems as long as we are calm in facing them and there are no riots or extreme

actions," he added.

The Prime Minister also reiterated that the measures to be taken by the Government might be "shocking" to the people but hoped that everyone would give their support.

The Government, he said, believed that with political stability and the support of the people, it would not have to seek aid from international funds.