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Dr M: Be thankful for good fortune

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Malaysians should preserve the tolerance which they have practised and nurtured all this while so that harmony between the various communities and the well-being of the country can continue.

In his Deepavali message, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should be thankful for the good fortune they have enjoyed.

They should also take the opportunity of the Deepavali celebrations to visit each other's houses and celebrate the occasion with friends.

Dr Mahathir said this year's Deepavali celebrations would be more joyous compared to the past two as the country had freed itself from the economic crisis which hit the region in 1997.

"We should be proud because the steps taken to protect our economy from being manipulated by currency traders and sharemarket speculators were of our own."

He said many predicted that the country would descend into chaos because of the currency and capital control measures which were introduced.

"However, it is clear their predictions and claims were totally wrong and the steps taken by the Government were successful in overcoming the economic crisis, so much so that those who criticised us now have to admit we were indeed right."

While wishing Malaysians a Happy Deepavali, Dr Mahathir said he hoped the festival of lights, which symbolised the victory of good over evil, would be happily celebrated by all.

Meanwhile, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said Malaysians were a unique example to the world with their tolerance, understanding and open-minded society, which enabled the country to enjoy peace, prosperity, stability and harmony.

"In wishing all Hindus a Happy Deepavali, Gerakan fervently prays for the goodwill, prosperity, peace and harmony for the Hindu faithful as well as Malaysians of other faiths."

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