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With stability, Malaysia can face any challenge: PM

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MALAYSIA can face any challenge as long as there is political stability and racial harmony. With this stability Malaysia has become the most advanced developing country in the world, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad says.

"When Malaysia is solid and strong, other people cannot threaten us as they do now," he said at the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) 50th anniversary dinner in Kuala Lumpur last night.

He said the recent attack on the ringgit by currency speculators had the intended effect, though not publicly expressed, of destabilising the country, resulting in unrest that will prevent economic recovery.

"Because Malaysians love peace, even though they are suffering and under pressure the country is still stable, and we have the opportunity to improve the economy," Dr Mahathir said.

He said Malaysia now has a good chance for economic recovery, and thanked the Chinese community in the country for supporting the Government's efforts over the years to distribute wealth equitably among the various races.

"They (the Chinese) are willing to share, and supported the New Economic Policy. This also ensures that Malaysia continues to be stable," Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister said the history of political parties in Malaysia is unique because in other countries it is difficult for parties that were once enemies to come together and form a coalition.

He said in the beginning MCA and Umno were fierce enemies. But the leadership of both parties were farsighted and wise enough to bring the two together into a coalition which was later joined by MIC and other parties to form the Barisan Nasional (BN).

"In Malaysia we are thankful because even though we have multiracial parties we are not enemies forever. In the end we cooperate with each other. Because of this our country is stable," said Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman.

He said MCA has made great contributions to the country and has been cooperative with the other component parties in the BN.

"Malaysia is not yet developed. We have Vision 2020 where we hope Malaysia will be a developed nation. To achieve this we need to maintain BN and its power, and work hard to develop our country," Dr Mahathir said. He expressed confidence that MCA will celebrate its 100th anniversary 50 years from now, and that the diamond jubilee will still be celebrated together with Umno, MIC and other BN component parties.

The gala dinner, held at the Bukit Jalil Stadium, was attended by about 13,000 guests. Among those present were MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, heads of BN component parties, and other MCA leaders and party members.

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