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Prime Minister wishes all Hindus a Happy Deepavali

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Wishing all Hindus a Happy Deepavali, the Prime Minister said today Malaysians should continue to cherish the country's peace and stability as this would ensure the nation's continued growth.

"Unlike some other countries, we Malaysians, irrespective of whether we belong to the majority or minority communities, are free to practise our own religions and cultures without fear.

"This is one of the pleasures we, as fortunate Malaysians, enjoy," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said in his Deepavali address to the nation.

"This year's festivities will be the first in the new millennium and I am confident they will be celebrated on a grander scale in view of the nation's stability and economic recovery.

"Tomorrow (Deepavali day), Malaysians from all walks of life will once again prove their ability to live in peace and harmony, respecting each other's religious beliefs.

"We have worked hard to achieve this harmony since independence and the results are evident today with the nation's development and stability.

"We have learnt from our mistakes in the past, especially the 1969 racial riots. We should work towards ensuring such incidents do not recur.

"We should use this auspicious day as an opportunity to continue traditions, like hosting open houses and visiting each other, to ensure continued peace and harmony."

(END)