

'We must ensure that country remains in peace'

KUANTAN Thurs — Calling on the people not to take peace for granted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the country will be thrown into chaos if law and order were disregarded

He said because peace was prevailing in the country people tend not to value it

The need to safeguard peace and harmony from undesired elements is something that we have to remember all the time he said

Citing an example he said a healthy man would only value the importance of looking after his health when he fell ill

We must ensure the country remains in peace as such a situation will bring a lot of benefits Nothing good can be derived from a chaotic situation he said

Dr Mahathir was speaking at a dinner with leaders of non governmental organisations and heads of department at a hotel here to cap his day long visit to Pahang

As we know we are staying in a developing country Furthermore we are not only multi racial but also segregated because of different religion language and culture

Thank God apart from several incidents arising from misunderstanding among the races generally we have managed to live in peace and harmony since we achieved independence 43 years ago

There is no permanent differences among the races although there was an incident in 1969 but we later managed to patch it up and continue to live in peace and harmony in a stable country This is something we should appreciate

Dr Mahathir said if the various races started to fight against each other to settle disputes there would be no end to it

If this happens it will no longer be safe for the people to walk freely in the streets The country would no longer be safe and the Government cannot perform its duty So it is important to maintain peace and stability

Dr Mahathir said there were certain quarters who felt that they could gain from the unrest and hence hoped for it to prolonged

To these people the loss of lives in the unrest is immaterial as long as they gain from it

Dr Mahathir said the Government would take action to stem the problem if it continued to prevail

The people should wholeheartedly support the Government's efforts to safeguard peace The main task of the Government is to enforce law and order The other responsibilities like eradicating poverty and building new roads are secondary

The Prime Minister said the Government had to be firm and the people should support this as they

would be the ones who would benefit from a peaceful environment

Dr Mahathir said while the Government valued the role played by non governmental organisations unfortunately there were some backed by foreigners out to undermine the Government

These backers even provide financial aid to the affected NGOs to create unrest in the country by portraying that the country had not been fair to the people and that human rights violations are rampant

They do not have good intention at all We must remember that the country an independent nation is our responsibility I believe the foreigners do not care for us or our country

Dr Mahathir said the foreigners were only interested to see the country was in chaos so that they could say that the country's leadership was not competent and could not safeguard the peace

The NGOs have to disassociate themselves from the foreigners unless they have good intention If they try to create unrest reject them

He said the country could attain the developed status by the year 2020 if everybody was sincere and knew how to safeguard peace and cooperate with each other

The people will get a lot more benefits from this