

FORGET AT YOUR PERIL

STAR 22 JUN 2001

Dr M tells Malays to discard the belief that they will always be safe

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told the Malays to discard the belief that they will always be safe and to start thinking that they may no longer be protected by their special rights and privileges.

The Umno president said Malays who do not rely on their special rights, who work hard, are patient, do not wish to get rich quickly and do things the legitimate way would become resilient and successful Malaysians.

A Malay society made up of such individuals would become more secure and able to compete successfully with others, whatever the circumstances, he said in his presidential speech at the Umno General Assembly yesterday.

"Think of the possibility that we may not be protected and that we need to be independent, to stand on our own two feet.

"Those who are usually bedridden find it difficult because they have weak legs and are headache-prone.

"If possible, do not accept help. If you accept, then reciprocate accord-

ingly.

"This is definitely more dignified than being ungrateful," Dr Mahathir said in a hard-hitting speech, themed *Malays Forget Easily*, which lasted two hours.

He rebuked the Malays for being weak even after 43 years of independence and in power in their own country.

"They will fail without government assistance in all areas," he said.

"After 43 years of trying, after billions have been spent, after several banks and a variety of funds have been established, today the achievement of Malays in trade and industry is still low.

"Is this caused by the government's lack of effort?

"A race which has been deprived of government assistance has clearly succeeded. Why can't the Malays, who are given all sorts of help, succeed?" he asked.

He warned that when globalisation becomes a reality, the Malays would no

longer be able to hide behind their special rights or the New Economic Policy.

All policies protecting their special rights would be challenged, he said.

"Democracy, equal rights, meritocracy and human rights will be used to destroy the Malays' special rights."

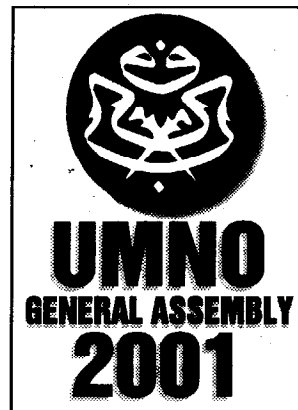
Quoting the legendary hero Hang Tuah that "the Malays will never vanish from the face of the earth," Dr Mahathir said:

"We can repeat these magic words, we can discuss, we can use this as a theme for our seminars.

"But if the Malays are not prepared to work hard, not prepared to seek knowledge and wisdom in this age, we can still disappear or become slaves like we were in the colonial days."

He urged the Malays not to forget the lessons of history and take things for granted, quoting Western thinker George Santayana that "those who do not learn from history will be tormented by repeating their mistakes."

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Also an eight-page special pullout with the full text of Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech, colour pictures and other reports.

Dr M: Malays have forgotten strength

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● FROM PAGE ONE

Dr Mahathir said the Malays had easily forgotten their history and how they had once been colonised and despised because they were fractionated and disunited.

"They have forgotten their strength and success, when they were once united and fought hard against the British and achieved independence," he said.

The Malays, he said, had also forgotten the true objective of their political struggle.

In reminding them, he posed the questions:

"Is it necessary for the Malay language to be the official language?"

"Can the status of other religions not be equal to that of Islam?"

"Is it necessary to differentiate between bumiputras and non-bumiputras?"

"In our obsession to obtain votes from certain quarters, all Malay rights that we have struggled for become the subject for bargain.

"Give us the vote and we will drop whatever is regarded as Malay rights," he said.

Although Malays were now free and able to run their own country, Dr Mahathir said they had yet to become a race that was successful and dignified.

"Without positive discrimination by the Government, only 20% of those entering universities will be Malays. Even then, they will pass with low grades."

He added that without government intervention in fa-

vour of the Malays, vice-chancellors, professors and lecturers would be made up of non-Malays and not monopolised by the Malays like today.

Economically, Dr Mahathir said, Malay businesses would be limited to stalls with blue plastic tops at the roadside.

"There will be no Malay brick shops in towns.

"Definitely there will be no skyscrapers owned by Malay corporate individuals, not even funds with Malay interests," he said.

Dr Mahathir said a government with little sympathy for Malays would privatise all public businesses and departments to foreigners and non-Malays.

Under them, privatised entities would develop and become giant corporations.