

# Change or lose out

SUN 22 JUN 2001

## PM: Malays fail to meet equity goal despite govt aid

**KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs:** Malays should change their attitude or forever lag behind other communities, says Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Stressing that they have failed to achieve the 30% equity target set under the New Economic Policy, the prime minister said:

"Despite the substantial government aid, the majority of Malays failed to maintain and expand their business.

"Unfortunately, Malays and other bumiputras do not possess a business culture ... they are impatient to become rich. Therefore, they will sell every opportunity and allocation given to them."

So long as this continues, he stressed, it is impossible for bumiputras to get their share in the economy.

The Umno president devoted a large portion of his two-hour speech at the opening of 55th Umno General Assembly on the reasons for this failure.

Mahathir said they made no attempt to change their attitude and overcome weaknesses and they are unwilling to acquire knowledge, work hard, study business management or face business risks.

"They still seek easy ways to get rich quick, and this includes bribery. We have to make an effort, be hard working, strive hard to seek knowledge and all skills, hold strongly to good values and reject all sins and practise the good deeds to improve our performance," he said.

Mahathir said Malays see democratic politics as an easy way to obtain something for themselves as it takes only a little effort to get enormous benefits.

In Umno and other Malay parties, he said, squabbling for posi-

## Malays will not be able to hide behind NEP, says PM

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Thus, they love to stress Malacca warrior Hang Tuah's saying that "the Malays will never vanish from this Earth".

"It is true that to date, we have not vanished. But, what kind of Malays have not vanished? For 450 years they lived in their own country as slaves to foreigners. But, have they become a race that is successful and with dignity?" he asked the 2,027 delegates.

Mahathir warned that if Malays cannot improve under a government sympathetic to the community, it will be almost impossible for them to do so under a government that provides no support.

He said it will be more difficult in a globalised

world without a government sympathetic to bumiputra for when globalisation becomes a reality, the Malays will no longer be able to hide behind their special rights, the NEP, and their borders.

"A government with little sympathy for Malays will privatise all public businesses and departments to foreigners and non-Malays. Under them, privatised entities will develop and become giant corporations. Perhaps, there will only be a handful of Malays among other officers," he said.

Mahathir also touched on attempts to import violent street demonstrations from a neighbouring country, Malay students in universities, and PAS's tactics to hoodwink the Malays.

tions is more important ... providing service and contributing to the good and to the development of the Malays and Malaysia are unimportant.

He said: "But power by itself will not ensure success for us. Power can actually destroy us, and today we see how power has made many of us irresponsible and very greedy until the goals we set out when struggling for independence are now forgotten."

He said Malays have not learned much from their history which they have coloured with legendary stories created to comfort and pride themselves to boost their ego.

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