

Mahathir: Let's work together

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Cast aside politics, civil servants told

By JOSEPH RAJ

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged civil servants yesterday to set aside their personal political leanings and work with the Government to bring prosperity and development to the nation.

In his keynote address to some 600 heads of departments — before a closed-door dialogue with them at the National Institute of Public Administration (Intan) at Bukit Kiara here — the Prime Minister said he was impressed with their professionalism, which had enabled the Government's programmes and policies to be smoothly implemented for the people.

But he pointed out that there were signs of attempts to sow seeds of hatred among members of the public service towards the Government.

"This has yet to hinder our efforts to develop the country, but it is not a good sign," he added.

Dr Mahathir added that the formula of political moderation, racial unity, and an administrative machinery receptive to implementing poli-

cies drawn up by the Government had worked well.

"Vision 2020 is only 19 years away and is not something impossible to be achieved if all these factors remain in place," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the country had achieved much after gaining independence.

"When we now say we are a Third World country, many say we are lying.

"Canadian Prime Minister (Jean Chretien) for example said, 'Malaysia is trying to pull wool over people's eyes. You are not a Third World country, you are a developed nation'," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said it was not that the Government could not be criticised.

"If a government in power feels there is no challenge to it, it will become a bad government ... it will not listen to the voice of the people.

"We should, however, not change (a government) just for the sake of changing.

"We should not change just because we can change.

"There will be no continuity. There will be no political stability," he added.