

# PM: Barisan has brought races together

STAR 24 JUL 2002

JOHOR BARU: Barisan Nasional's success in managing racial and religious differences has enabled Malaysians to share in the country's prosperity and live in peace and harmony, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister said the coalition, comprising many racial-based political parties, which was uniquely Malay-

sian, had helped to lift language, cultural and traditional barriers.

"Barisan has been successful in managing these differences, so much so that people need not look for (political) alternatives for protection.

"This proves that Barisan, since the era of *Perikatan* has brought all races to work together to develop the coun-

try.

"Whatever conflict that we experience once in a while is only trivial and can be settled through mutual understanding and goodwill.

"This form of success and understanding can only be found in Barisan," he said in a foreword of the inaugural Johor Barisan Nasional convention.

The two-day convention, which starts today at the MBBJ Indoor Stadium, would be attended by more than 1,000 leaders and members from Umno, MCA, MIC, Gerakan, and the People's Progressive Party (PPP).

Dr Mahathir, who is also the Barisan chairman, called for further efforts towards closer co-operation among the com-

ponent parties.

Mentri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said the convention showed that members of the Barisan parties were committed to the coalition's struggle and agenda.

He said that apart from co-operating during general elections, the parties should discuss and chart policies for socio-economic development.