

Ling: Master English to be competitive

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PETALING JAYA: The *rakyat* must strive to master the English language in order to improve themselves and the country's competitive edge, said MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik.

This was because English remained an international language in both the fields of knowledge and business, he said.

Education, he said, would become more important in the coming years with the increasing globalisation of commerce and business.

"If our country wishes to compete with other nations for new markets and investments, our labour force must accept the fact that a higher quality education will make

them more productive and efficient.

"Many countries are now heading towards a knowledge economy. The instillation of knowledge in all areas will only add to the value of their industrial products," he said in his message yesterday in conjunction with National Day.

Dr Ling said drastic growth could be expected in biotechnology, information technology and communications

Despite the uncertainties besetting the global economy, Dr Ling said Malaysia had managed to weather it well by charting positive growth in two consecutive terms this year.

"The country is also

expected to record a growth of 3.5% this year. As one of the most important sectors in the country's economy, the transport field has been very encouraging.

"The Tanjung Pelepas Port in Johor has handled two million TEUs of containers in two years, which is a new world record" he said.

Other examples of successes, he added, included Port Klang and the KL International Airport.

Political developments, said Dr Ling, also augured well for Barisan Nasional, with the coalition having won two by-elections with an even bigger majority in Indera Kayangan and Ketari, and recapturing Pendang parliamentary seat from PAS.

"This is proof of the co-operation within Barisan. Malaysians are giving strong support towards Barisan's development and economic policies, and the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," he said.