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People continue to show they can

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LET'S face it. We are proud to be Malaysians. We feel a sense of pride when we hear our national anthem played in a foreign land.

We could feel our eyes brimming with tears as we watch our fellow countrymen doing the country proud with their achievements.

We say a silent prayer of thanks when our national athletes receive their medals at international sporting events.

The truth is, the spirit of "Malaysia Boleh" (Malaysia Can) lives in us. Deep down inside, we know that if anyone can do it, a Malaysian can do it as well.

Even in the past one year (since we last celebrated our National Day), we have seen many great achievements that have not only made us smile, but even prouder to be Malaysians.

First there was the introduction of the Government Multipurpose Card (GMPC).

Called MyKad, the launching of the card in last September was an indication that we Malaysians are all geared to embrace technology.

In a true "Malaysia Boleh" spirit, this multi application card can store information such as details of identity card, driving licence, passport, e-Cash and health records.

It is the first government-issued electronic chip-embedded multi-purpose identity card in the world and even the Governments of the Phillipines, Laos, Myanmar and Bahrain are now looking into applying similar MyKad applications in their countries.

And also last September, our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did us proud by being conferred the "Once-a-Lifetime Asean Achievement Millennium Award".

This recognition was received from the Asean Business Forum for his contribution in turning Malaysia from an agricultural nation into the fourth most industrialised economy in the world.

Another Malaysian who has done the country proud is Datuk Lee Yee Cheong, the past president of the Institution of Engineers Malaysia.

Lee was made president-elect of the World Federation of Engineering Organisation at its general assembly held last year and will be installed as WFEO president in the next general assembly in Tunisia, in 2003.

Lee is the first Malaysian and first Asean-country member to elected president.

Malaysians also love challenges. Early this year, the country saw brothers, Hasan Nawawi Abdul Rahman and Ahmad Ridhwan, coming home after cycling for 26,565km around the world.

The brothers left on January last year and took 388 days to complete their journey, passing through 18 countries.

Hasan Nawawi, who took a year's leave from his duties as the Port Dickson district officer, is now the Kuala Kangsar District Officer, and was recently conferred the Darjah Dato' Paduka Mahkota Perak (DPMP), which carries the title "Datuk".

Later in May this year, 26 students from Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) also reached the peak of Mount Kalapathar in the Himalayas, and proudly placed the Jalur Gemilang there.

Another university student that has done us proud is Ng Gek Gek.

Though suffering from polio, she recently received her Masters in Computer Science from Universiti Sains Malaysia, proof that disabilities

should never prevent anyone from achieving success.

On the entertainment front, Malaysia's biggest selling rap group Too Phat is set to break into the European market with its second album Plan B.

According to the deal signed between the recording label Positive Tone (a subsidiary of EMI Malaysia Sdn Bhd) and Germany-based Pro-perGamble Records, the album will soon be distributed in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France, Poland, Italy, Scandinavia, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

(Word has it that Too Phat's original Plan B album will also be sold at a discounted price beginning next month, so that is another reason for us to shout "Malaysia Boleh!").

Another entertainer who has done us proud is our very own James Bond girl, Datuk Michelle Yeoh, who received the Outstanding Young Malaysian Award 2002 just a week ago.

Yeoh, who was in town to promote her latest movie, The Touch, was one of the 10 people between the ages of 18 and 40 chosen as "exemplary young people" by the Junior Chamber Kuala Lumpur.

And finally, we also vouch that we are not only a nation with good spirits, but also known for our kind hearts and generosity.

When TV presenter Ras Adiba Radzi appealed for donation, seeking a sum of RM300,000 ...we not only managed to get more than required, but also did it in a very short span of time.