

30/08/2002

PM: Put aside racial and religious differences

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged the people to put aside their racial and religious differences and celebrate National Day as Malaysians.

He said by putting aside the differences, the people would gradually be able to create a Bangsa Malaysia which would ensure unity and peace.

"Ours is a multiracial country and there is no other occasion for us to show our unity other than on our country's independence day."

"Upon that basis we can develop our country in a peaceful environment," he said while addressing about 2,000 people from 32 associations and organisations representing a cross-section of society, who gathered at Dataran Perdana here to present National Day greeting cards to the Prime Minister.

"Unity is most essential for our country's peace and well-being, and we should forget our differences."

He said with peace and security, Malaysia could be developed to benefit everyone.

"That's our hope," he said.

Dr Mahathir said even though the Malaysian people were different by their descent, language, culture and religion, when they celebrated National Day, the people were united as Malaysians.

"On its anniversary, we can truly feel that we are Malaysians."

Dr Mahathir was confident that the people would continue to live in peace and prosperity for as long as they appreciated the country's independence.

Earlier, he said he was touched by the support shown by the people in celebrating National Day.

Later, he went around greeting and receiving the cards from all the groups. Joining him was his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.