

# The Malays of today—by Dr Mahathir

NST 22 AUG 1983

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — If Malays are challenged, they will rise to the occasion. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir reminded delegates today when he criticised a Malacca speaker for saying

that the Malays were not ready to face the challenges of heavy industry.

"If we in Umno say we don't have the capacity to do something, then what's the use of talking. We, as

leaders, must say we can. If there are weaknesses, we overcome them."

He said when the universities were first opened in the country, Malays were saying "where would we find the Malays to go to university."

"When we were asking for independence some Pas leaders said how could we want independence when we didn't even know how to make needles.

## Ambitions

"This is what I call an inferiority complex. We have the ability if we have the courage... it is our task as Umno leaders to give our children the spirit to prepare themselves to face the challenges of the future."

He stressed that the time to do anything was now.

"I have big ambitions for my race. I don't want to admit defeat to anyone. The Malays should have an attitude that has no capacity to admit defeat and an attitude that is willing to climb mountains.

"The Malays will change if we have the spirit to work and to inculcate good values. For every step, there is a start. A thousand mile voyage begins with one step," he said, quoting a Chinese proverb.

He reminded the delegates that no society could remain static. The Malays today were not like the Malays 20, 30 years ago. As leaders, Umno should provide guidance and the direction to be followed.