

# 36 YEARS OF

MM 25 MAR 1985

# UNITY

## MCA important in Govt, PM tells birthday gathering

THE MCA celebrated its 36th anniversary with a unity dinner last night attended by some 2,000 people. The highlight of the evening was the cutting of a birthday cake in the shape of a Wisma MCA.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was the guest of honour, cut the birthday cake witnessed by his Deputy Datuk Musa Hitam, MCA life president Tun Tan Siew Sin, acting MCA president Datuk Dr Neo Yee Pan and acting deputy president Datuk Mak Hon Kam.

Dr Mahathir had the crowd laughing with his opening remarks which was addressed to Umno instead of MCA members.

The Prime Minister could not help but smiled. He, however, was quick to correct himself and began a lengthy speech touching on the need of a united Barisan Nasional among the component parties.

Dr Mahathir said MCA is an important party within the Barisan Nasional,

so is its representation in the Government.

He said the party has a special place in the Government and that the MCA representing the Malaysian Chinese has a voice in the Government.

Dr Mahathir told the gathering the MCA leader sits next to him in the Cabinet and this is to ensure that he hears what the leader has to say.

"Like when (former MCA leader) Datuk Lee San Choon was in office, he need not have to shout to me, he only need to whisper."

### Negotiations

Referring to Datuk Dr Neo, he said: "He is still whispering to me continuously."

Touching on the MCA crisis, Dr Mahathir reminded the party leaders that differences could be sorted out through negotiations and trade-off but there must be no one party out to crush the other.

He urged them to abide by the spirit of the joint agreement and reconcile.

The Prime Minister said he still re-

ceived telegrams from certain quarters but declined to elaborate.

"I appeal to all component parties not to do anything to open the wounds which we have tediously tried to heal," he added.

Earlier, Datuk Dr Neo called for less politicking in the country and it is in this direction that the MCA and Gerakan is setting up a joint council.

"It is vital that both parties reduce their areas of differences and increase their areas of co-operation, particularly among the grassroot leaders."

He said the joint council of the two parties within Barisan Nasional would be able to bring about amicable resolution of differences between both parties and help consolidate the unity of Barisan.

Also present were leaders and representatives of other component parties.