

Don't raise communal issues, urges Dr M

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LUBOK ANTU (Sarawak 2nd Division), Wednesday.

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today small issues involving communal interests should not be made obstacles to achieving cooperation and unity in the country.

The plural society in the country should instead give priority to national goals and interests to ensure continued progress, the Prime Minister said when opening a Barisan Nasional Youth work camp here.

He said the various

communities in the country should not be fanatical in fighting for their own interests in small matters until the important task of working together to make Malaysia a progressive and dignified nation was relegated to second place.

He said the government did not stop the immigrants from keeping their own language and culture nor did it force them to change their names as had been done in several countries.

"But they (the immigrants) should accept the fact that this country

has an official language which can become the foundation to further strengthen unity," he said.

This concept had been a proven success and he hoped the people would truly understand the objectives behind it.

The Prime Minister also urged the young in the country to learn about the spirit of cooperation that prevailed during the struggle for independence when all communal feelings were put aside for the sake of unity.

Unfortunately, he said, there were many among the young nowadays who failed to appreciate the value of the

unity of that period which had brought about independence, a blessing which he described as beyond comparison.

He was of the opinion that national integration would be more easily achieved if all the people were aware of the importance of the "prosperity" enjoyed by the country today.

He also said the theme of the work camp, "towards achieving the objectives of national integration," was in keeping with national needs.

He said the question of unity had become a big issue which could adversely affect the stability of the country if not put right.