

CHOOSE WISELY, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the people will have to choose carefully who they want as their representatives in the Government.

The Prime Minister said that although there was freedom of choice, in the final analysis it was the representative who would be in the Government.

"If we make the wrong choice, we ourselves will suffer the consequences but if we choose wisely, we will benefit from it," the Prime Minister said when he opened a convention on racial development at the Putra World Trade Centre.

He said the people were free to participate in the activities of political and professional groups and in unions but they had to ensure that the country was peaceful, united and progressive.

Every community, he said, had an equal responsibility in determining the fate of the country and its people.

"Sometimes we have a particular community taking a line of action solely for its own interest and ignoring the adverse consequences to the other communities," he said.

Dr Mahathir said every community should realise that if its actions caused loss to others, it too would suffer from the effects.

This was because no one could isolate himself from the rest of society, nor

could any group or union isolate itself from the other groups in the country, he added.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was created by a concerted effort of all and not by people of one race.

He said the people must ask themselves whether Malaysia would benefit everyone.

"I think it would . . . if we can be united, live peacefully, reduce misunderstandings, the fruit of our labour will be a peaceful and prosperous nation," he said.

Dr Mahathir criticised some people

for saying they wanted unity but acted otherwise.

He also said that some professionals had caused problems instead of promoting national unity.

Youths too, he said, had been influenced by adults who deliberately created misunderstandings.

"In our colleges and universities today, we find that because of this influence, students and academicians are split along racial lines," he said.

Thus, the Government had to institute various steps to create a Malaysian race, Dr Mahathir added.

For example, he said, the National Unity Department had been searching for common values and elements to unite the people.

The Rukun Tetangga, he added, was another scheme which had been given a new focus on improving neighbourly ties.

He also noted that there was a change in attitude of a certain political party which was trying to court the other races.

Dr Mahathir said the opposition party now realised that it had to be on better terms with the various races in order to achieve success.

He also advised the people to be sensitive to each other's feelings, especially on matters relating to race.

He also said the people should realise that the Government could not satisfy the wishes of all races.