

# Malaysians share common destiny: Dr M

NSunt 27 APR 1986

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Malaysians have generally accepted their common destiny despite the existence of strong racial sentiments among certain quarters, the Prime Minister said today.

He said history showed that the various races were no longer living in isolation but with a common bond and attachment.

"Thus, we realise from our history that we are one race, built on the wisdom of our leaders and vastly different from earlier times when we were living by ourselves without a common spirit or destiny," he said when opening a seminar on *Malaysian Biography* organised by the Institute of Higher Education of the University of Malaya under the sponsorship of the *New Straits Times*.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians had to determine if they want to live in peace and unity, based on mutual respect and understanding or in troubled times. The latter would not benefit anyone.

History, he said, also revealed that by and large, efforts aimed at creating a common identity among Malaysian had succeeded.

"The black marks along the way have given us direction in differentiating between good values which have to be nurtured and built upon and bad values which have to be forgotten."

According to Dr Mahathir, history had a greater role to play than merely providing insights into the past.

"History shows us the direction to the future. Only by examining and knowing what we did yesterday, can we determine our actions for today. Similarly, we can only know our true self, if we know our roots."

Biographies, therefore, had a useful role to play in the determination of a nation's future. "Strong nations with highly-developed cultures are those which know how to value and appreciate contributions of their heroes."

## ● DICTIONARY JUST FOR HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES: P13

The Prime Minister felt that the contributions of those who had served the nation in the past should be understood and remembered. Such knowledge would be useful in determining the process of nation-building.

Writers of biographies should, however, not run afoul of the moral codes of the people, especially when writing on the private lives of past leaders.

Dr Mahathir urged the private sector to come forward and sponsor the writing of biographies.

Also present were the acting vice-chancellor of the university, Professor Datuk Hajjah Asmah Haji Omar and the chairman of the seminar committee, Professor Abu Bakar Hamid.