

# Dr M: Development projects for all No bias against ancestral origin

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By Ahmad A. Talib

**CHANGLOON, Fri. —** Malaysians whose ancestors came from foreign lands should consider themselves lucky because they are not burdened by the discriminatory practices of their countries of origin, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He cited the case of Malaysian Indians who were not affected by the caste system, which was still widely practised in India.

Speaking to a multi-racial gathering at the Sekolah Menengah Changloon here, the Prime Minister said Malaysian Indians could forge ahead in their professions regardless of their birth.

He said in India the Government faced the wrath of the higher Hindu castes when it tried to abolish the system and uplift the status of the Untouchables.

"In Malaysia, the question of caste

does not arise at all. The MIC leaders fully realise that the question of caste had never hindered the progress of Malaysian Indians in their endeavours.

"However, one ex-MIC leader has been going around the country alleging that the caste system had prevented him from progressing further in his career. He is now co-operating with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah of Semangat 46, hoping that this will bring him new luck."

The same ex-MIC leader had served the Government once and was involved

#### ON PAGE 3:

- PAS 'HAS BETRAYED ITS PAST'
- OSMAN: GIVE MAHATHIR A BIG WIN

in helping implement Government policies. But he has since been criticising the Government and was teaming up with the Opposition to further his own selfish political interests, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the BN Government was always doing its best to bring development and progress to the people, regardless of their ancestral origins.

In fact, the Prime Minister said, even the minorities were taken into the mainstream of national development. He cited

Malaysians of Portuguese and Thai origins as an example.

The two communities are treated as Bumiputeras, thereby enabling them to participate in programmes meant for the Bumiputeras, like the Amanah Saham Nasional scheme.

These groups had responded positively to the policy, reflecting their willingness to take part in programmes aimed at improving the quality of Bumiputeras' life.

However, Dr Mahathir reminded these people to be wary of attempts by certain leaders, who were trying to create disunity by poisoning the minds of the minorities.

The Prime Minister said he was aware that Tunku Abdul Rahman had gone around telling Malaysians of Thai origin not to support the Barisan Nasional saying that the party had not done anything for them.

The Semangat 46 adviser had gone to the extent of telling the Malaysian Thais that he was a half-Thai himself.

The Prime Minister called on Malaysians to be grateful for the good things that they enjoy, not only due to the absence of natural disasters but due to the hard work of the Government.