

Malaysians told of need to remove

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PM: Unity must

suspicion and prejudice

be lasting

By K.P. Waran

KUALALUMPUR, Mon. — A review must be done to seek ways to ensure that unity continues to exist in society, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"To this end, efforts to unite the people must be intensified so that any suspicion and prejudice that might still be found among the communities could be eliminated, the Prime Minister added.

The review must also be carried out to identify the causes of the racial bias that still existed. Dr Mahathir also said he wondered whether the suspicions were based on communal feelings.

If the answer to this is "yes," then solutions must be found to overcome it, he added, stressing that the need was especially great among children who were segregated because they attended different schools.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at a goodwill photography prize presentation ceremony and exhibition organised by the *Nanyang Siang Pau* at the Putra World Trade Centre.

He added that each community had its own cultural values and characteristics and that everyone should understand the ways of life of the various races.

"In this regard, goodwill photography competitions and other similar activities will help bring about a more caring society, a society where the various communities practise mutual respect for each other," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the nation had enjoyed peace, progress and prosperity because of the strong *muhibah* element among the people.

But to ensure a brighter future, it was important that the people, especially the present generation, pre-

serve the feeling of goodwill among them.

He added that the people's unity, nurtured through the spirit of goodwill, was a vital precondition for the country to develop further.

"Creating a harmonious relationship among the people will be one of the country's biggest challenges."

The nation's objective, he said, was to create a Malaysian race that was not only loyal to the country but shared a common future as well.

He said there was much goodwill, understanding and tolerance in society now, which was a marked difference from the situation two decades ago.

Later, speaking to reporters, Dr Mahathir said a greater effort was needed to strengthen unity although the nation had seen much progress in the last 20 years.

The Prime Minister said it had been accepted by the world that Malaysia had succeeded in fostering harmony in its multi-racial society and achieved more than other countries, including some advanced nations.

In the competition, Foo Kok Kin from Ipoh won the first prize — a gold medal and \$20,000. His photograph showed an injured person being carried away when the Butterworth jetty collapsed two years ago.

Ten others won excellence awards and their prizes included \$1,000 and a silver medal each.

They are Liang Shyang Yih, Ng Chan Chiew, Lau Yong Fang, Au Kim Cheong, Pang Piow Kan, Tan Song Chuan, Tan Li Na, Ang Eik Hua, Chan Kean Loong and M.L. Kong. Thirty others received consolation prizes.

The competition attracted 600 entries.