

# Dr M reminds Malaysians of late Tunku's legacy

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded Malaysians of the rich legacy of unity and tolerance among the country's different races left by *Bapa Malaysia*, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Alhaj.

He said the people were fortunate of being able to live in peace, harmony and unity as envisaged by the late Tunku and whose legacy his successors had inherited.

Dr Mahathir said: "Throughout the world there is constant strife, racial conflict and enmity among the various races with the loss of thousands of lives and destruction of property".

"If we do not share that same fate, it is because of the tolerance and unity of the various races in the country envisioned and cultured by the late Tunku."

Dr Mahathir said the rapid development which Malaysians now enjoy would not have been possible without his endless efforts to liberate the people from the grips of the imperialists and to achieve unity among the people.

Archives Datuk Zakiah Hanum.

The late Tunku's son, Tunku Ahmad Nerang, members of the Cabinet and former ministers were among the large crowd who attended the launch.

Dr Mahathir added that the cost of building the memorial was borne by the Government with contributions from the private sector and the public and this augured well for the spirit of Malaysia Incorporated.

"Malaysia should be proud of this memorial as it is the biggest of its kind in the world and even bigger than the Presidential Library in the United States.

"It is even bigger than the Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon Memorial Library."

Dr Mahathir said that the democratic system and the country's unique racial unity which the late Tunku achieved as well as his struggle for Independence was now on exhibit at the memorial.

"The late Tunku, who faced many obstacles in his struggle to achieve independence, proved that his approach was not only healthy but also a successful one."

"Racial prejudices and conflicts have been eradicated and replaced with tolerance, compromise and mutual respect."

Dr Mahathir said as a respected and sovereign race, the people must always appreciate the contributions of those who had served the race and the nation.

"No one can deny the fact that Tunku Abdul Rahman had served the nation well and was truly a premier statesman of this country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when he officially launched the Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Memorial at the former Residency building in Jalan Datuk Onn here.

The RM32 million building comprising three blocks — the main Residency building and two new blocks — is expected to be a major tourist attraction.

The memorial is located on a five acre plot of land. It has 110,000 sq ft of space and houses exhibition halls, a repository of priceless artifacts and records obtained from the Tunku's valuable collection. His family also contributed some of the Tunku's personal items.

The building also houses the Tunku's original office as well as a store and research office with the former leader's early speeches, writings and memorabilia.

Also present was Minister of Culture and Tourism Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Hamid and the Director General of the National

Dr Mahathir added that it was his wish that the memorial would be used as a research centre on the late Tunku by both local and foreign researchers.

He said the memorial contains all the facts regarding the country's first Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir said the items on exhibit at the memorial were a historic heritage and contribution of a statesman whose sacrifices could not be forgotten.

Speaking to reporters later, Dr Mahathir said another memorial would be built in remembrance of the third Prime Minister Tun Hussein Onn in Johor. He said the Government was now looking into this.

He later toured the building and exhibition hall which houses historic memorabilia of *Bapa Malaysia* as well as numerous news clippings and photographs on him.

Dr Mahathir also launched a book on the late Tunku, written by Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard, entitled "Tunku: His Life and Times".

Earlier, Ahmad Sarji said work on the memorial building project took about two and half years to complete and that the private sector, media, State Governments and individuals contributed RM15 million towards the project.

He said the Tunku's former office was moved from its site and restored here and was one of the memorial's main attractions.