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Dr M our most visionary leader

V. Wong

I WAS moved to write when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said, "I am not important. I am just passing through" to Lorraine Hahn, when asked how he wished to be remembered during a CNN interview last Tuesday, also shown on TV2 at 11pm.

As a young child aged 10 when Malaya gained its independence in August 1957 from the British, I always remember our first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, as the instrument of our independence and "Father of Malaysia".

He was deeply loved by the non-Bumiputera citizens for acknowledging their birth-rights and giving them a place to call 'home'.

The next Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak is remembered for various rural development plans, which brought prosperity to farmers and agriculturists.

Tun Hussein Onn, who took over on the death of Razak in 1976, was much respected for his integrity. He brooked no nonsense and brought to justice the corrupt in high office, our sort of 'man of all seasons'.

He never sought power or glory but had that thrust on him on the untimely death of Razak. He did the best he could for the nation and passed it on.

I was sceptical of Dr Mahathir when he first came into premiership. He seemed too brash and pushy.

Push he did! Did he ever! He pushed us Malaysians into the limelight of the world.

We became an economy to be reckoned with in the 1980s until the recent regional economic crisis.

He is the most visionary leader Malaysia ever had. Despite the crisis we are in now, we cannot deny that it is Dr Mahathir, who made us sit up and say to the world 'Malaysia Boleh'.

He hopes to push the nation into the next millennium as a developed country and whatever his faults, he will be remembered as the Prime Minister who made Malaysians stand tall! Long may he live to see us through.