

26/11/1999

Dr M did country proud with so many successes

Sujata Nandy

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad should be commended for his speech at the launching of the BN manifesto on Sunday.

Once a country associated with illiteracy and cheap labour, and her people thought to live on trees, Malaysia has now become one of the most prominent nations in the world. This is more so since Dr Mahathir headed the Government.

Before his time, people elsewhere knew of Singapore, but not of Malaysia. Before his time, we were subjugated and were even forced to build railway lines and roads in neighbouring countries.

Although attacked unceasingly, whether by the foreign media or by the opposition parties in the country, Dr Mahathir has been undeterred and led the nation with vision and foresight.

He has accepted all shame and ridicule hurled onto his path. The book *Shit* by Shanon Ahmad gained widespread publicity as it supposedly unveiled the Prime Minister's misconduct during office. Nevertheless, the book is not banned. Is that not democracy, which Malaysia is claimed to be lacking?

Regarded as blunt and forthright, it appears that Dr Mahathir lacks ethics in holding the office of Prime Minister - to the foreign media. However, no country has had a Prime Minister (except for Tunku Abdul Rahman, who snubbed the British for making heroes of their pirates, in reply to the assertion made in an encyclopaedia that the Malay race were pirates), who spoke without fear or favour like Dr Mahathir.

Five years ago, Lim Kit Siang formulated the "Robocop" theory telling people to "try five years or die five years". We have not died or even come close to it.

Instead, we have hosted the Commonwealth Games, the Formula One race and the World Cup of Golf. And that is not all, we have become economically strong again.