

# Learn history to avoid frictions: PM

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## Country remains peaceful despite relentless attacks

**KOTA KINABALU, Thurs:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today valuable lessons could be learned from history to avoid mistakes of the past as Malaysia grapples with continued attempts to destabilise the country.

He said the reasons Malaysia remains peaceful despite negative attempts to destabilise the country are directly attributable to principles, policies and the philosophy of the government.

"This is a part of the Malaysian story and something the people should learn about," he said when opening the 16th Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia here.

Mahathir said the country's historical achievement, including the recent one, was the handling of race relations to prevent racist sentiments from developing and disrupting peace and harmony in the country's multi-racial soci-

ety.

"After the 1969 race riots, the National Front government took pains to remove the roots of such antagonism and jealousy between the races," he said.

He said that through political and economic actions undertaken by the government, the differences and disparities between races had been reduced.

"As a result, Malaysia is one multi-racial country which is free from the kind of race and religious frictions and confrontations which characterise other multi-racial or multi-religious countries," he said.

Nonetheless, there remained certain quarters who were unhappy with the prevalent peace and harmonious

racial relations.

Mahathir said hatred is still being sowed by those bent on winning support for their parties at all costs and these experiences are part of Malaysian recent history which the people should know and learn about.

There had also been attempts by foreigners through their controlled-media to encourage inter-racial and inter-religious violence in Malaysia, he said.

He said: "They advocate democracy as an end in itself. If the democracy leads to violence and destruction of an otherwise stable and prosperous society, it does not matter."

About 200 scholars and historians are attending the five-day conference.