

# Change but don't follow blindly, says Dr M

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'We want new a breed of Malays who can negate bad influences'

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sat:** Malays need to make greater changes without losing their identity and religion if they want to be successful in competing with other races.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said information technology (IT) can expose Malays to the hedonist culture which can damage Malay virtues if followed directly.

"But closing our eyes and refusing to accept IT is not the way to save ourselves," he said in his keynote address at a symposium entitled *The Malay Identity in the 21st Century* organised by the Sultan Idris Education University.

He said the government is working hard to form a new breed of Malays so that they can refute unhealthy influences.

Malays who have been embedded with good values of life and can negate unhealthy influences from the outside are the ones known as the new breed of Malays, he added.

"The new breed of Malays are not the ones who consume alcohol, gamble, womanise, not accept Islam and the Malay tradition as pictured by some who are still backward and unable to counter the challenges of the modern age." The Prime Minister said the new breed of Malays are educated, have the spirit to face new challenges while holding on to the teachings of the religion.

Mahathir said those trying to stop the creation of the new breed of Malays are those who do not want to learn the English language in fear that they will become Christians if they do so.

"We were at the losing end when some of us were against the introduction of the English language in schools during the colonial days as it caused the Malays to live in a backward situa-

tion," he pointed out.

Mahathir also warned of the effects of being a poor nation, which will cause Malaysia to become weak and easily controlled by others.

"This might happen here if the people keep on following the words of the Westerners," he said, adding that

Malaysians will go against their own government with charges framed by the foreigners.

"It is the same thing when the foreigners say the New Economic Policy benefits only the cronies of some leaders, some Malays start calling others cronies forgetting

the gains they have received from the policy," he added.

Mahathir also said the situation is the same with those giving their undivided support to globalisation, championed by the West.

"But when the country suffers and becomes poor due to globalisation the govern-

ment is blamed." Mahathir said Malaysia knows that it is too weak to stop the wheels of globalisation but it is trying to find ways to accept it with minimal losses.

"It is the same with K-economy (knowledge based economy) ... we have to find ways so we can gain from it."