

Master English

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PM advises younger generation not to be left behind in the information age

■ By MERGAWATI ZULFAKAR

TOKYO: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday told Malaysians, especially the younger generation, to master the English language or risk being left behind in the information age.

The Prime Minister said even people in the more advanced countries like Japan and France were mastering English because a lot of information was being disseminated in that language in this age.

"English is a universal language. If we do not learn the language, we will not be able to read and if we want to wait for the translation, it

will take time.

"It is easy to read and write in English. Read the English newspapers and books and when you have the chance, converse in the language," he told about 200 Malaysian students here during a dialogue at the Malaysian Embassy on the last day of his four-day visit to Japan.

During the two-hour dialogue, Dr Mahathir spoke of his experience in learning the language, saying that when he was a librarian in school, he would borrow magazines in English to read them dur-

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Easy to read English books, says Dr M

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ing the weekends.

"I would finish reading the books during the two days, although I did not understand some of them.

"My ability to read and write in English is because of this. It is easy to read English books," he added.

The Prime Minister said the Government spent one-fifth of its budget on education and some of the amount was used to send Malaysian students overseas for tertiary studies.

"We want these students to come back and serve to help the country become a developed nation.

"It will take time to do this. Look at Japan, it has demonstrated to the world it is an industrialised nation.

"Today our country is already the most developed developing country," he said.