

Master English for your own good, Malays urged

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MALAYS will be left out and become victims of the information technology (IT) age if they do not master the English language, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister said "mastering English will not make us any less Malay or Islamic."

"We have now entered the Information Age. We, along with other Islamic countries, have missed — and are not

part of — the Industrial Revolution and the Industrial Age.

"The question is whether we will also miss the Information Age, which will radically change human lives, including us Malays," he said here yesterday.

"The true nationalists are those who help their race to succeed through the mastering of knowledge and attracting many to learn the language of this successful race."

He said only those who master English would progress and succeed in the IT era, citing that the Japanese, French and even the Chinese recognised this fact and were vigorously learning English.

The Prime Minister said: "Let us not, due to this narrow perspective towards the Malay language, allow the Malays to miss out on the Information Age revolution, thereby regressing and be looked down

upon and made to look stupid.

"Believe it, we will once again be colonised if we fail to master the language."

On education, Dr Mahathir said it was upsetting to see Malay children underperforming despite the Government giving "more than sufficient" resources to help them.

"What we know is many Malay children are lazy and uninterested in studying. They prefer to loaf around.

"They get upset if such truths are mentioned. Whether stated or not, the truth cannot be denied."

Dr Mahathir said if not for female students, the number of Malays in universities would be halved.

"When will male Malay students realise their responsibility, if not towards their race, religion and country? Do they think society must support them all the time?"