

PM outlines new Malay dilemmas

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PETALING JAYA: The misinterpretation of Islam and dependence on "crutches" are the two dilemmas that Malays are facing today, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said many Malays who did not really understand Islam, had been misled by the seemingly pious turban and Arabic dress of the Islamic party leaders.

"It is not far fetched to say that, for many, their Islamic and Malay values have been destroyed resulting in deviation from the Malay and Islamic culture that many of them are willing to vote and support a party which advocates and practises violence," he said.

Dr Mahathir said there was dan-

ger of the wrong party being elected and forming the government as the country practised the right for every citizen to vote into power the party they thought would best serve them.

"The dilemma that the Malays and other Malaysians face is whether they should allow the country to be destroyed or to ensure that people are not subjected to manipulations," he said at the 7th Prime Ministerial address organised by the Harvard Club of Malaysia here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said Malays not only had to face the threat of these brainwashing practices but they also tended to lean on the "crutches" in the form of

privileges accorded to protect them.

"Unfortunately their view is that the crutches are symbols of their superior status in the country. The sad thing is that they are not even using the crutches properly. As a result, they gain nothing or very little from these aids," he said.

He said "crutches" invariably weakened the users and the Malays must discard them in order to be strong and to be able to fend for themselves.

Dr Mahathir said the old dilemma of the Malays was whether they should distort the picture a little in order to help themselves and the new dilemma was whether they should or should not do away with

the "crutches" that they had got used to.

"There is a minority of Malays who are confident enough to think of doing away with these aids gradually, but they are a very small minority. Unfortunately, their numbers are not going to increase anytime soon and these people are generally regarded as traitors to the Malay race," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said the dilemma faced by those who wanted to build a strong and independent Malay race without "crutches" was that they would most likely end up being unpopular and lose the ability to influence the necessary changes in the culture and value system.

"It seems that they should not try

and yet they know that without the cultural changes the Malays are going to fail," he added.

He said in order to succeed, the Malays must change their culture and look towards work as a reward in itself.

"They must regard achievements at work as a reward. Although there should be some financial rewards, it must not outweigh the satisfaction obtained from the result of their work," he said.

He added that they must have proper work ethics, which involved taking pride in what they did.

He added that races that took pride in their work were the most successful.