

# 'School of Occidental Studies a good idea'

STAR 3 JUN 2003

IT IS a good idea to set up a School of Occidental Studies at a local university to understand the Europeans and their ways, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister and Umno president said he agreed with the suggestion made by vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

In reference to the world renowned School of Oriental and African Studies in London, he said: "They study us, so let us study them."

Dr Mahathir defended his opening address in which he had strongly criti-

cised the Europeans for their warring tendencies and imposing their will on other nations.

"What I said about the European race is true. I dare anyone to prove me wrong," he said in his winding up speech.

He said when the Arabs, Chinese and Indians came to Malaya, they did not try to conquer the country.

"But when the Portuguese (Europeans) came, they invaded Malacca," he said, adding that this seemed to be their tendency.

He noted that this was also true of

Canada which the Europeans conquered while New York was purchased from a Red Indian chief for only 10 bottles of brandy.

Dr Mahathir also talked about how the British bought over an early Kedah sultan by offering him a pension, Rolls Royce and yellow umbrella in exchange for their rule.

He said he was making this comment not so that Malaysians would hate Europeans but only to understand them.

"If we want to deal with someone, we must know what they are like and their characteristics," he said.