

29/10/2003

Gave us confidence

H.L. Abdullah

THE impending retirement of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad marks an important chapter in the history of this young nation. I do not pretend to agree with all his policies or actions, but I will say his leadership for the past 22 years has greatly benefited the nation. He has provided strong, decisive and clear leadership, and this has made a great difference to the evolution of our country.

One of the greatest legacies of Dr Mahathiris in giving self-confidence to our people - the belief that we can shape our own destiny. Of course, Dr Mahathir has been a great proponent of self-discipline and perseverance (even in the face of sharp and unwarranted criticism), the virtue of hard work, self-criticism and sacrifice (especially the ability to sacrifice instant gratification for delayed gratification).

I salute him for showing that Asians are as good as, or even better, than the white men.

We acknowledge that we are backward in many ways and that Western society has many virtues, but we will not swallow everything they tell us. Dr Mahathir has shown that he is willing to learn from the West, but he is not willing to be subservient to them or be their mouthpiece.

H.L. ABDULLAH  
Penang