

Dr M: Dearth of history books a loss to Malaysians

BY SA'ODAH ELIAS

PUTRAJAYA: The dearth of factually correct history books on the country's various phases and how they affect the "little people" is a great loss to Malaysians, said Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The former Prime Minister said the lack of writing culture among the people had resulted in the young not being able to appreciate the hardships and achievements of the older generations.

"Unlike the British, most of us are not keen to write about our day-to-day experiences, like how inflation is affecting us. The lack of reading materials written by our own people is unfortunate because the younger generation cannot learn from our history.

"They also cannot appreciate why the older generation likes to stress on how difficult their lives were," he said when launching the memoir of for-

mer Federal Judge Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Shamsudin.

Commending Abdul Aziz for writing the book, Dr Mahathir said the younger generation could learn a lot from the writer's spirit and perseverance and the fact that he still kept an active interest in various issues.

That is the spirit that I tried to instil in the people while I was the Prime Minister. I always stressed that we had to work hard if we wanted to get paid.

"Unfortunately, there are still many who are willing to accept payment for doing nothing, like becoming a sleeping partner."

Dr Mahathir added that such a trait had resulted in Malaya being ruled by the British in the early days as the Malay Sultans of old were only interested in the "political pension" promised to them.

The release of Abdul Aziz's 70-page memoir titled *Statesman of Five Eras* coincided with his 83rd birthday.