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UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

'Speaking English does not make you less Malay'

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Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad greeting alumni at the Sultan Abdul Hamid Old Collegians Association alumni dinner in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Friday reminded people to make use of the English language.

Employing his famous wit, Dr Mahathir said English was not only for the "England" (English) speaking community.

Speaking at the Sultan Abdul Hamid Old Collegians Association alumni dinner ceremony here, Dr Mahathir said English was a universal language and a language of knowledge.

"It does not make you less Malay or Malaysian if you speak English.

"To acquire knowledge, you must learn the English language.

"You need to master the English language everywhere you go as the language is useful.

"For subjects like Science and Mathematics, they are in English.

"You will impress the world if you know how to speak or have a good command of English."

Present at the ceremony was his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Dr Mahathir said the government was moving towards reviewing the curriculum plan for schools nationwide to ensure it was dynamic.

Citing an example, he said, religious subjects should include

values that must be applied in daily life, thereby ensuring a more holistic character development in students.

"The curriculum schedule will be changed, but religious subjects will remain.

"But it will not be a whole day period of the (religious subjects) learning session as we do not want students to only know how to recite prayers, but lack knowledge in other subjects.

"This means we should provide good education for them and they will graduate with a lot of knowledge in hand rather than becoming individuals full of drama."