

Master English Tun M

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians have much patriotism for the nation, but is this enough to sustain national development?

Speaking to *theSun*, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (*pic*) said many other matters are just as important. One of them is prioritising a high standard of education and especially having a strong command of the English language.

“Students must master English for the country to be on par with other developing ones,” he stressed.

“We need to have an education revolution in the way we educate our students. However, this has not been done in our country for reasons unknown to me,” he said, adding that he had wanted to introduce a new way of educating students but it was turned down.

Mahathir said the education revolution is aimed at changing the way students are taught.

“Our teachers received their education in the national language, Bahasa Malaysia. They might also try to learn English, but they failed to master the language. Doing so requires practising English in their everyday lives.”

Mahathir said today, any language can be learned easily with technology.

“There are language courses provided by experts in electronic media. We can slowly listen and understand what is being said, and we will be able to master English.”

He lamented that here, many Malays believe that because Malaysia is the land of the Malays (Tanah Melayu), the only language that should be used is Malay.

“In the past ... yes, Bahasa Malaysia was sufficient for us. But in the present and future,



pg. 1
The Sun - 26/7/2022
Mahathir calls for education revolution to promote learning of English using modern methodologies

if we don't master other languages, we will lose contact with others because bilateral relationships are now closer than before.”

Mahathir disclosed that the education revolution he had proposed was to promote the learning of the English language using modern methodologies.

“Online courses are one way to learn English, or any language. The way we currently teach the language is no longer in line with the state of progress in the field of education.”

He pointed out that we still depend on teaching in the classroom, but it is difficult to find teachers who are fluent in English.

“Our teachers can speak a little English but are not fluent in the language. So, we have to leverage online courses provided by experts using tapes or through

electronic media.”

Mahathir said electronic media offers the opportunity to listen to lessons repeatedly for a better understanding, adding that it is a new way of teaching but in Malaysia, there is still dependence on the class teacher.

“That's the old way. Our new way is to use courses prepared by experts. Not only in learning languages but also in other subjects. Some experts can record all their lessons in a very efficient way, so school teachers only need to oversee the class and answer questions if the students have any,” he said, adding that teaching in Malaysian schools is outdated.

“We still teach the same old way, which depends on the grade teacher. The problem is we do not have grade teachers who are fluent in English or other subjects,” he said.

