

Dr M: 'I was the most feared PM'
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 — Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today admitted he was considered Malaysia's most-feared prime minister, and attributed this to his character and personality.

"What is my legacy? I was the most feared prime minister," Dr Mahathir said during a special gala dinner celebrating his 86th birthday here.

"When Tun Hussein Onn appointed me as deputy prime minister, some were saying how could this ultra-Malay be chosen as deputy prime minister?" he said.

The former prime minister later added that the most enduring mark of his tenure as PM was the absence of communal violence.

"The legacy I am most appreciate when I was PM was that there was no racial riots... even under a Malay extremist like me," he said candidly.

Dr Mahathir said he had learned to take criticism in his stride, and advised other politicians to do the same.

"Politicians have to accept the fact that they can be criticised. They have to stomach it; I do. Sometimes I even criticise others," he said to bouts of laughter from the audience.

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