

# DR M KEEPS HIS DINNER DATE WITH MRS THATCHER

LONDON, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad called on British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher at No. 10 Downing Street yesterday four hours after he arrived from New Delhi.

The Malaysian Prime Minister arrived at 7p.m. to keep his dinner date with Mrs Thatcher.

He was accompanied by Malaysia's new High Commissioner to Britain Encik Kassim bin Mohamed Hussin, who met him earlier at Heathrow Airport

Both Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and Mrs Thatcher nosed briefly for Press and television cameramen before proceeding with their dinner.

The Malaysian Prime Minister's arrival in London on a private visit was, at his own request, a very low key affair.

But even then, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was clearly a man whose reputation had preceded him.

His visit to London is watched

with some interest by the media in the light of a "cooling of relationship between Malaysia and Britain.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, the first Malaysian Prime Minister who did not receive his education in Britain, is seen as a new breed of no-nonsense Malaysian leaders.

The City, as London's financial centre is known, remembers him with little endearment for his retaliatory measures against the stock exchange's revised rules which made it difficult to buy British companies in the stock market.

British industrialists, still smarting from his "buy British last" policy, are still resentful of his Look East policy which meant contractual losses worth over several million pounds.

A leading national newspaper *The Guardian*, played up the story of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's arrival yesterday, and said that the fate of British industrialists who suffered from

his policy depended on whether Mrs Thatcher's powers of persuasion worked during their dinner meeting,

In spite of the resentment felt because of his hard-hitting policies, it is generally felt that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir had been successful in bringing home some long standing grudges felt by Malaysia against British post colonial attitudes.

His British hosts have gone some way to show that they regard his visit to Britain, albeit a private one, as an important opportunity for the two countries to patch up past misunderstandings.

Today, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir will be entertained to lunch by the chairman-designate of the British Overseas Trade Board, Lord Jellicoe.

Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, who was not able to meet Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir earlier due to prior engagements, will call on him at the Malaysian High Commission today. — Bernama.



Mrs Thatcher greeting Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir at her official residence at 10 Downing Street on Wednesday. - UP/pic.