

Malaysia pledges support for SEAMEO

BAGUIO (The Philippines), Tues. — Malaysia pledged its full support and co-operation today to the South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO).

Education Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed gave this pledge in an address at the 10th South-East Asian Ministers of Education Conference here.

"Much has been achieved in the various fields of SEAMEO activities," he said.

"SEAMEO has achieved great success in establishing institutions for upgrading and facilitating the teaching of various essential educational subjects in South-East Asia.

"The direct results of this aspect can now be seen. But in education, the indirect benefits are even greater although the time taken would be even more.

"The people we train in our centres are already imparting their skills to others and playing a considerable role in improving the quality and scope of education."

Dr. Mahathir said Malaysia's commitment to SEAMEO stemmed from her own policy towards education and training.

"It is our firm belief that resources allocated to the dissemination of skills, when carried out properly, are never a waste.

Not a waste

"Indeed they are worth every cent spent.

"In 1974, for example, Malaysia spent about one quarter of her budget on education. This demonstrates the seriousness with which Malaysia regards fruitful educational activities.

"And certainly Malaysia regards the activities of SEAMEO in the same

light and worthy of the same support."

Dr. Mahathir also said that the formalisation of the relationship between SEAMEO and Unesco would further strengthen the existing co-operation between the two bodies.

He said there was greater scope for formal co-operation and collaboration with other UN agencies.

He also said that Malaysia would underwrite the total operational cost, estimated at US\$2.94 million of the second five-year permanent phase of operation of Reccsam.

As the host government of the centre, it is underwriting half the capital and operational costs of the first five year phase of the centre which ends in June.

It has also been contributing since 1973 the entire earnings from an investment of \$2 million to the SEAMEO Educational Development Fund.