

EASIER TERMS ON THE CARDS FOR INVESTORS

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad**, has indicated the possibility of a liberalisation of conditions for foreign participation in Malaysia's economic development.

"We want to look into foreign participation much more closely, particularly joint marketing and manufacture. For certain purposes, we may even relax a little the conditions we impose on foreign investments in this country," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, in reply to a question on the directions in which the relaxations were contemplated, said these could be in matters like equity participation, granting of work permits to expatriates and joint participation in retail business.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who as Trade and Industry Minister, had been responsible for keeping up the momentum of foreign capital flow into the country, said that effective implementation of the economic programme and strengthening of relations with neighbouring Asean countries would be the priority items in the domestic and foreign policy spheres.

"Overall I would give greater attention to domestic affairs," he said. In the international field "my concern is with Asean".

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir hoped to visit the Asean capitals to discuss with their leaders on "how best we can achieve closer relations and closer economic co-operation."

There was scope for increased intra-Asean trade and participation in manufacturing, industrial complementation and transportation.

"The question of expanding the preferential trading arrangement could also be looked into," he said.

Referring to the problem of peace and stability of South East Asia, **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir** said: "I want to see an end to the Kampuchean problem."

Asked whether he favoured closer defence ties among Asean countries, he said he was for greater co-operation on a bilateral basis. "There would be no multilateral defence agreement."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who represented Malaysia at the recent Islamic summit conference in Taif, Saudi Arabia, said he wished to enhance the relationship with the Islamic nations.

"We see a lot of potential for co-operation between Islamic countries."

He added that Malaysia, which was not committed to any particular side, "is interested in working together with all Islamic countries."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir has been concerned with the implementation of various economic programmes and projects in the last five and half years as deputy to **Tun Hussein Onn**, who stepped down today for health reasons.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who would announce his new Cabinet on Monday, said there would be some revamping of the Ministries for proper implementation of Government policies and programmes.

"I would like to see greater involvement of Cabinet Ministers in implementation. There should be closer rapport between the politicians who are making the policies and the civil

servants who are carrying them out."

Asked about an easier statement that there would be some change of style with regard to implementation without affecting basic policies, he said: "I have always felt that the government policies are not fully communicated to the implementers and the implementers are left very much to themselves in the interpretation of government policies. As a result some of the interpretation may not be exactly as the policy makers intended."

— AFP.