

Respect these links, strong nations urged

NST 18 AUG 1981

(P)

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today that stronger nations should never use the inter-dependence of countries as an opportunity or framework for "manipulation and oppression".

"This inter-dependence must be viewed as an asset for the good and prosperity of all," he said.

Speaking at the inauguration of the United Nations Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC) here, the Prime Minister said the future prosperity of a nation was dependent on the other countries "as much as the problem or potential destruction of a nation is dependent on the other countries".

Many of the problems today, he said, could no longer be regarded as specific to a particular country or region.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also called for "an agenda for action" by national governments and the world community on the findings of various researches, seminars and conferences.

He said the "will to act" on these findings was important.

Realities

On the centre, he said APDC should not only be an institution which provided intellectual leadership but also an institution which was pragmatic in dealing with the realities of the region with its diverse components.

"It must address itself to the problems confronting the countries of Asia and the Pacific, particularly the less developed ones," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said rapid de-

Asset for good of all: Dr M

velopment need not necessarily constitute orderly change, the same as planned change need not necessarily result in the expected.

"Some of these factors are unknown to us and some others are still beyond our adequate understanding.

"Development, which is a dream of all countries, therefore, has a dimension of uncertainty and risk," he said.

Training

He said development research and training must be upgraded "to meet our needs so that we can better plan and implement our development, better understand the impact of our policies and efforts, and be in a better position to correct our course of action."

Datuk Seri Dr

Mahathir said participation by national institutions in the centre's activities could be an important programme to strengthen national development training and research institutions.

However, care must be exercised by both the centre and the national institutions, to ensure that this approach would enhance the role and impact of the national bodies in their respective countries.

There was a possibility, he added, of the national institutions being reduced to mainly supporting the international institution instead of being mutually supportive.

Research

He said developing countries were lacking in development oriented research; as such, they become the focus of foreign researchers who may have questionable intentions when they try to prove that developing countries were inherently incapable of development.

"It is in this light that national institutions must take greater interest in research and build their own research capability," he added.

Positive steps must also be taken to bring research institutions closer together so that research projects are better co-ordinated to avoid duplication and wastage.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said sharing of expertise and experience to solve specific problems within a framework of regional co-operation such as Ascan could promote consistent approaches and more efficient policies.