

What looking East means

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues.
— Looking East will not result in the kind of lopsided policy that we had when we used to "Look West".

It will mean, in the words of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, a much more balanced policy in which the best of the East and the West will guide the development of Malaysia.

In his opening address to the Fifth Asean-Japanese Symposium sponsored by the *Mainichi* newspaper chain of Japan and the Asian Research Council, the Prime Minister reiterated that "Looking

East" did not mean "Japanization". Nor did it mean that Malaysia "will do business only with particular countries in the East" like South Korea and Japan.

However, it certainly would mean that the almost total dependence on the West in the past would be replaced by a more balanced attitude towards both East and West and trading with traditional trading partners "as long as it pays to do so," he said.

Room for more

The Prime Minister also took occasion to point out that while Japanese Government aid, private sector investment and the assistance to Malaysia and Asean as a whole had expanded over the years, along with co-operation in trade, tourism and cultural activities, more could be done.

Noting that the Asean region's

exports to Japan comprised of raw materials and fuel, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that the continued imposition of non-tariff restrictions only impeded the growth of Asean's export of manufactured products to Japan.

Hence measures like quotas, the "cumbersome and intricate procedures of various Japanese agencies, were obstacles to the industrial growth of Asean countries."

Assuming that the political situation in South-East Asia, directly or indirectly, would always impinge on Japan's economic and strategic interests, it was clear that Malaysian and Asean stability and prosperity was important in that context, and therefore merited continued Japanese support in the future.