

Let's continue to work together: Dr M

NST - 9 DEC 1982

BANGKOK, Wed. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight reiterated the need for Malaysia and Thailand to continue to work together for their mutual security and well-being.

"As close neighbours, common sense dictates that in our relations with each other there can be no alternative to mutual trust and willingness to work together in facing our common problems," he said.

Both countries shared the common conviction that their peoples should continue to live in an environment of peace and stability so that they can get on with the business of providing their peoples with a better life and a brighter future.

"The priority that we have mutually given to our relations is unquestionable, so, too, our need for each other."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was speaking at the official dinner hosted by Thai Prime Minister Gen Prem Tinsulanonda.

In view of the troubled

From ZAINON AHMAD

times, especially the world economic recession and the challenges to peace and stability in the region, it was imperative that the two countries continue working together, both bilaterally and within the context of Asean.

Security

"We have the fullest confidence in one another's commitment to a policy of mutual respect, close co-operation and good neighbourliness," he added.

In the security field, Malaysia would continue to give the highest priority to the two countries' joint war against the communist terrorists in the common border area within the context of the General Border Committee (GBC).

"We will also, through joint-action and co-operation, continue in our endeavour towards the social and economic upliftment of our peoples

in the common border area."

Besides the GBC, the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries on the establishment of a joint authority for the exploration of the Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Thailand was a unique example of how problems between nations can be resolved.

It symbolised the maturity and good sense of the two countries and was particularly relevant today when issues of territorial claims constituted major sources of irritation between nations.

In addition, the two countries had also identified many areas of common endeavour to benefit Malaysians and Thais — from the joint development of the Golok River basin and other areas of agricultural co-operation to joint exploration for coal and other mineral deposits.

As close neighbours, Malaysia stood by Thai-

land in the face of events in Kampuchea.

Particularly for Thailand, the situation in Kampuchea posed a direct threat to its security and also placed an undue burden on it, given the many thousands of refugees who had fled to the country.

Vietnam's military intervention and continued occupation of Kampuchea, represented not only a direct interference in the internal affairs of the country, but a threat to the peace and stability of the region.

"Malaysia will work closely with Thailand for the preservation of peace and stability in the region."

Earlier on arrival in Don Maung airport in Bangkok, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was accorded a ceremonial welcome.

Also present at the colourful welcoming ceremony were Thai Deputy Prime Minister Major Gen. Pramarn Adireksarn and Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila.

Gen. Prem garlanded Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah and an entourage which included Foreign Affairs Ministry Secretary-General Tan Sri Zarkaria Ali.

The Thai Prime Minister then accompanied his Malaysian counterpart to the dais where he received the salute from the guard-of-honour.

While the band played the Malaysian National Anthem, a 19-gun salute was fired.

Later both Prime Ministers had a closed-door one hour meeting at the Erawan Hotel where Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and his party are staying.

Tomorrow Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir will visit several agricultural projects in Ayuthia province to be followed by an audience with King Bhumibol.

He is the first foreign dignitary to be received by the King since the ninth Chakri monarch was taken ill in mid-July.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah are visiting Thailand to take part in the year-long celebration commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Chakri dynasty and the founding of the city of Bangkok.