

# Focus on Dr M's style and country's aims

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THE Malaysian Government's ambition to transform the country into an industrialised nation, problems with its balance of payments and its fight to ward off the dragging effects of the recession are among the highlights of special report on Malaysia in the September issue of the South magazine.

The cover story, which detailed the major aspects of Malaysia's developing economy, gave a brief but concise summary of the trials and achievement of the Malaysian economy since the 1960s and explained why the current policies are adopted.

(Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's leadership style since he took over as Prime Minister and the economic goals he has mapped out for the country, also inevitably came into focus.

South is a Third World magazine which deals with Third World issues.

In its lead article entitled "Changing Attitudes for Development," the report said Dr Mahathir holds the view that to change the course of the country -politically and economically — the atti-

tude of the people must first be changed."

"He saw the country's boundless natural resources going to waste because the country failed to make full use of them. After a century of growing rubber and achieving substantial progress in production technology, Malaysia still sells the commodity raw.

## Savings

"Hardly two per cent of the country's annual production of more than 1.5 million tonnes of natural rubber is consumed domestically."

The Prime Minister who held the Trade and Industry portfolio (between 1978-81), is convinced that Malaysia has to go downstream in order to enjoy greater prosperity

On Malaysia's move into the heavy industries sector, the report said: "At first glance, the combination of vast energy resources and abundant natural resources makes Malaysia a good candidate to host heavy industries. But the smallness of domestic market and uncertain international outlook, have injected a

note of caution into the Government's plan to industrialise.

"Ambitious projects such as pulp and paper production, petrochemicals and aluminium smelting have either been shelved totally or delayed."

However, the report noted that despite criticism from some parties, the Government is going ahead with the development of gas resources. Two multi-million dollar gas projects are currently under way in the States of Terengganu and Sabah.

From the conservation point of view, these projects will save millions of dollars of gas flared from the oil fields. But to make these savings worthwhile, a number of other heavy industrial ventures have to be undertaken. Among them are a large gas-fired power plant, a methanol plant on Labuan and an iron plant in Terengganu.

The report said the Prime Minister places considerable importance on changing the attitude of the people as the basis for developing a progressive and productive nation and thus deliberately adopted the Look East

policy to stimulate this change.

Among the other articles in the special report are:

- Fighting back from the recession — which detailed the Government's efforts to climb above the balance of payment problems.

- Stepping up efforts for overseas trade — which describes how Malaysia is trying to make inroads into new markets through its home-bred international trading corporations.

## Strategy

- On the move with new investments. This article talks about the country's industrial master plan which will chart out the country's long-term industrialisation strategy into the 21st century.

- Productive uses for basic commodities, describing the contribution of primary commodities to the GDP and the performance of the various commodities.

- Banking on a good reputation — an article on the development of the banking sector.

The report also included an interview with Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh on the State's problems and development programmes.