

Call for a special drive in aid of 'golden crop'

# Palm oil's

# woes — Dr M

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**KUALA LANGAT, Sat.** — Developed countries that adopt, a protectionist stand on the import of palm oil by imposing heavy duty on **processed** palm oil were today described as **"manipulators of the free trade"** by **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir** Mohamad. This, he added, was an **obstacle in international trade.**

"The EEC has imposed a 12 per cent import duty for processed palm oil and four per cent for crude.

"This duty structure shows that the primary importers of palm oil are favouring only the import of crude palm oil from developing countries," he added when opening the German-Malay-

By **NURIANA SAMAD**

sian joint-venture Company, Henkel Gleochemicals (M) Sdn Bhd, here:

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's export of palm oil, described as the country's "golden crop", had been hampered because of these heavy import duties and added that developed countries wanted to process raw materials so that they could grab all the added value.

He further said that although the results of the Asean-EEC Ministers meeting "we quite good" he did not think that the EEC would reduce the import duty on palm oil and processed Palm

oil. "But there must be some way for us to increase our exports of palm. Oil to Europe."

Dr Mahathir also expressed regret that Malaysia's export of palm oil to Islamic countries had been undermined by the spread of wrong information on the commodity.

Dr Mahathir said the Government had developed several strategies to broaden the export of palm oil.

"We will continue to study the export duty structure of this commodity. Besides this, our technical groups have been sent abroad to allay the uncertainties that abound over palm oil."

Dr Mahathir also called on exporters & palm oil to assist the Government by providing information to potential importers.

He said the export of palm-oil next year was expected, to increase to 3.5 metric tonnes compared to this year's

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## 'Modern technology is vital for industry'

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3.1 metria tonnes.

The Government would also continue to increase the production of palm oil through the development of structured estates.

Dr Mahathir said, structured estates would favour the use of better technology besides increasing the productivity and reducing production costs.

He also stressed that Malaysia must be aware of the need for modern technology.

"With this awareness, we Will always want to

wait for it to fall onto our laps. Those who want something must try hard to obtain it. For us who hunger for technology, we must realise that we need it."

Dr Mahathir said developed countries were not ashamed to find the opportunity to acquire better technology.

He hoped that the joint-venture company which involved the transfer of technology would always instil this awareness as "we cannot wait for foreign experts to teach us".

It is true that there are some foreigners who are not happy to impart

their technology..but if we are aggressive and truly prepared, our efforts will be rewarded."

Dr Mahathir said the oleochemicals joint-venture was a project aimed at acquiring technology from a German firm in the field of chemicals by taking advantage of a raw material, palm oil.

He called on the management and staff of the company to formulate a strategy on the transfer of technology.

The Henkel Oleochemicals (M) Sdn Bhd, located on a nine-acre site in the Telok Panglima Garang industrial estate

is the country's most technologically advanced downstream oleochemical plant.

It is a joint-venture between Henkel KGA of West Germany and a local company, Jomalina Sdn Bhd.

Oleochemicals are chemicals derived from natural oils and fats as opposed to chemicals originating from a petroleum source.

They are widely used in the manufacture of a range of products, from soaps, cosmetics, toiletries and pharmaceuticals to synthetic rubber, surface coatings and lubricants.