

Plan to privatise dockyard

We are studying the implications: Dr M

NST 21 NOV 1984

LUMUT, Tues. — The operations of the \$600 million dockyard at the naval base here may be **privatised**, Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today.

"We are studying the implications of privatising the ship repairing facilities at the base," he told reporters after visiting the naval base.

"We have not come to a decision on this yet. We have to do an in-depth study on whether to privatise the facilities or to form a Government department to run the dockyard.

"We have spent a lot of money to put up the ship repairing facilities and perhaps the Government may be able to earn some money from them."

The dockyard project is the second military project to be considered for privatisation. The RMAF's Airod Centre in Subang is also under consideration for privatisation in the servicing of aircraft.

Dr Mahathir visited the naval base to open the Fleet Operations Command and the navy's communication centre. He also toured the base, inspecting facilities ranging from the dockyard to workshop and was briefed on progress of the base and the dockyard.

Display

He was accompanied by the Chief of Navy, Vice-Admiral **Datuk Mohamed Zain bin Mohamed Salleh**, the Deputy Minister of Defence, **Abang Abu Bakar Abang Haji Mustapha**, and the Secretary-General of the Ministry. **Tan Sri Mohamed Yusuf Abdul Rahman**.

The Prime Minister and Ministry officials also visited the navy's Maritime Tactical Centre and watched a simulated display of war games using highly sophisticated electronic equipment and computers. The equipment is used for training naval personnel.

Dr Mahathir told newsmen that he was satisfied

By JOHN KAM

with the progress at the naval base since his last visit three years ago.

"The base was now nearly 100 per cent complete and operational and he was happy with its smooth running. He hoped the officers and men would maintain the standards set.

"The Government has spent about \$1.2 billion on the naval base and the dockyards and we hope that the modern and up to-date facilities will be utilised to the maximum benefit," he said.

Among other things, the communications centre has modern equipment capable of communicating with naval units between 2,000 and 5,000 nautical miles away with the aid of computers.

Earlier, while opening the Fleet Operations Command, Dr Mahathir said modern and sophisticated equipment alone would not mean success in battle.

Efficient

"We must have members of the armed forces who are disciplined, motivated, dedicated and efficient. This is important because they are the ones who will make use of the facilities and ensure success. The military personnel must also have a positive attitude in carrying out their daily duties."

He said the navy would

not be able to carry out its responsibilities and duties efficiently without discipline, which he described as "the backbone of any armed forces."

He hoped that from time to time, the armed forces would make efforts to ensure that their personnel had high discipline.

The Prime Minister stressed that the defence of the country lay in the hands of its own armed forces, although the country had friends who would come to its aid in the event of any undesirable event.

Friends

"But we should never lay too much hope on any other party in any eventuality. Whatever aid they give, although sincere, will be restricted. We can only ensure our future by ourselves."

In his briefing for the Prime Minister, **Tan Sri Mohamed Yusuf** said "Project Lumut" was the biggest project ever undertaken by the Ministry.

Tan Sri Mohamed Yusuf said all the works had been completed and Malaysia had achieved its objective of bringing the base back to its own soil from Woodlands, Singapore, where the previous base was sited.

He said \$1.2 billion had been spent on the base — about \$600 million each for the base proper and the dockyard facilities.