

DR M: ASEAN WANTS POSITIVE VIET APPROACH

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir urged Vietnam today to respond positively to Asean's moves for peace in Kampuchea.

"Vietnam must be made to realise the need to engage in meaningful dialogues with Asean and the parties concerned to remove the impediments to peace in Kampuchea," the Prime Minister told the delegates at the 18th Asean Ministerial Meeting here this morning.

He said the only guarantee for a viable solution to the problem lies in the reasonable accommodation of the interests of all parties involved.

He said a situation must be created that all can live with and none will set about to undo.

Dr Mahathir also said that while the Kampuchean question was Asean's biggest political challenge,

there had been a lack of response to the grouping's initiatives lately.

"We must continue to exercise patience and consider every possibility in our tireless search for a just, productive and viable political solution.

"This solution should be so in the long term as well as in the short run," he stressed.

Dr Mahathir said it was Malaysia's view that for a just and viable solution, certain imperatives must be met. These were:

● THE suffering of the Kampuchean people must be ended while Thailand's security must be ensured; and

● THERE must be a government of national reconciliation and the Kampuchean people must be given the opportunity to exercise their right to ensure a Kampuchean State that is sovereign and independent.

Dr Mahathir said this obviously meant that "finally, foreign troops cannot be on Kampuchean soil.

"For a settlement to be productive, it is essential that we understand our concern must not only be for the short-term but also the future of the region.

"As much as the other peoples of this region desire to live free and independent in their own homelands, so do the Kampuchean people."

Dr Mahathir said Asean should aspire for a political solution which establishes the ground rules for the "game of peace in South-East Asia, which establishes the principle that there must be respect for each other's independence and territorial integrity.

"It is a principle based on non-interference in each other's internal affairs," he said.