

Open up market, Dr M tells Japan

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has called on Japan to be more open to products from Malaysia to further improve the pattern of economic relations between the two countries.

The Prime Minister says that while Malaysia has acquired and learned many things from Japan, a lot still needs to be done to reduce the present unequal and unhealthy trade equation between the two countries.

He says this in a message to mark the launching of a special news service, Japan Service, by Bernama tomorrow coinciding with National Day.

The Japan Service is a special bulletin service designed for Japanese businessmen interested in trade and investment opportunities in Malaysia and the Asian region.

Dr Mahathir describes its launching as timely, as it will help provide economic and regional news of interest to Ja-

pan's business community.

He hopes that the service will enable Japanese businessmen to be more knowledgeable and receptive to Malaysia's economic environment and programmes.

Dr Mahathir says the service will help Japanese businessmen to play a more effective role in promoting better trade and economic relations between the two countries.

He says Malaysia has long trade ties with Japan, the country being one of the primary markets for Malaysia's produce.

But the situation of Malaysia being an important market for Japanese goods and manufactures has become somewhat obsolete because like Japan, Malaysia too now needs markets for value-added products.

Malaysia too requires markets for her products as the country is developing various industries to produce more value-added goods.

He says Malaysia's present economic direction is not dissimilar from the target that Japan set for herself in the 1960s, namely high speed growth through increased productivity, greater industrial production and increasing exports.

Investor

Dr Mahathir says that Japan is now the leading foreign investor in Malaysia and in recent years the relationship between the two countries has become close in terms of trade, investment, economic and technical co-operation.

"This relationship is a result of the desire and determination of the two Governments to work closely together for mutual benefit," he said.

Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in his message on the occasion of the launching of the service expresses deep respect for Malaysia which, he says under the leadership of Dr Mahathir has attained re-

markable progress in various fields.

Mr Nakasone says he had the opportunity of cultivating friendship with Dr Mahathir during the latter's visit to Japan in January 1983 and during his reciprocal trip to Malaysia four months later.

In extending his greetings on the occasion of the country's 28th Independence celebrations, the Japanese Premier says the relations between Japan and Malaysia are experiencing a phenomenal development and is reaching a "new milestone" with the introduction of the Look East policy by Dr Mahathir.

Mr Nakasone said both countries have been developing closer links in trade, investment, economic and technical co-operation and through personnel exchanges in recent years. He hopes the ties will be further strengthened.

He adds that Japan has so far extended every possible support to Ma-

laysia's "self-help efforts" for economic and social development.

Mr Nakasone says that since 1982 Japan has trained more than 1,000 young Malaysians in Japan under the industrial technical training programme to encourage the Look East policy.

"The furtherance of friendly co-operation between Japan and Asian countries constitutes one of the most important objectives of Japan's foreign policy," he says.

He has also sent former Prime Minister Mr Zenko Suzuki as his representative to the National Day celebrations in Malacca tomorrow.

Malaysia-Japan Economic Association (Majeca) president Raja Tan Sri Mohar Raja Badiozaman in his message says that through the joint efforts of Majeca and its counterpart, Japan-Malaysia Economic Association (Jameca), the relationship between the private sectors of the two countries has become closer. — Bernama.