

# PM calls for Chinese-M'sian diplomatic framework

*Mahathir - overseas trips*

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PEKING, Wed. — The development of relations between Malaysia and China should not rely on high level visits alone. A framework should be worked out to sustain improvements in relations which must include resolution of outstanding issues so that exciting possibilities in economic co-operation and trade can be realised.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this today at the banquet in his honour hosted by Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang at the Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square.

The Prime Minister,

By **MUNIR MAJID**

who arrived early this afternoon for a nine-day official visit, said: "... an important pre-requisite for mature and stable relations among States is better mutual understanding. I am determined to do my part towards this end." He continued: "It is my hope that just as politics dominated the first decade of our relations, economics will come to dominate the next decade."

However, the Prime Minister underlined the need to resolve satisfactorily what he described

as certain "core bilateral issues" which have impeded the overall growth of relations between the two countries, which established formal relations 11 years ago.

Although he did not identify those issues, it was pretty certain he was

□ **PICTURE: P7**

referring to Peking's continued moral support for the CPM (Communist Party of Malaya) and China's overseas Chinese policy. He can be expected to raise these matters when he holds official talks with Mr Zhao Ziyang tomorrow and

when he meets Chinese Communist Party Chairman Deng Xiaopeng on Friday morning.

In making his first pitch at the banquet this evening, Dr Mahathir called upon the Chinese not to be "mired and shackled to historical legacies and fidelities."

The Prime Minister called upon the Chinese not to be entrapped by history. He argued: "Your Excellency (Premier Zhao Ziyang) and other leaders of China have assured us on many occasions that some of these issues are 'left-

★ **TURN TO P 2, COL 10**

# PM Need to rectify declining trade balance

NOV 21 1983

★ FROM PAGE ONE

overs from history and that time will resolve them. While admittedly time is a great healer, I hope we will not allow history to hold the progress of our relations hostage. As history marches on, so must we.

Dr Mahathir nevertheless expressed the hope that even as existing problems are being resolved, efforts must continue to add substance to relations.

He referred to the large private sector delegation accompanying him on the visit as a visible sign of the real Malaysian desire to give substance to bilateral relations. He expressed the hope that during the visit every avenue would be explored for economic cooperation and mutually beneficial business ties.

About 130 business leaders are accompanying the Prime Minister, a number with specific proposals and ideas, some with fixed appointments. A number of briefing sessions and working lunches have been arranged for the Malaysian businessmen.

Bilateral trade between Malaysia and China has been declining since 1980, and Dr Mahathir pointed to the need to rectify this apart from the trade balance which is against Malaysia.

## Solutions

"We must ensure that pious statements followed by inaction or indifference, which have characterised other bilateral trade relationships do not also come to characterise Malaysia-China trade," the Prime Minister warned.

Touching on regional peace and stability, Dr Mahathir called for renewed efforts to find solutions, especially over the Kampuchea issue, based on sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. All countries in the region, collectively and individually, should get on with the more urgent task of socio-economic development.

It is understood that the Prime Minister will be call on Prince Norodom Sihanouk, leader of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, who lives in the Chinese capital, before he leaves for Shanghai on Saturday morning.

Earlier Dr Mahathir was welcomed by Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang — who visited Malaysia in 1981 — at the Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square — the centre of this capital city of about 10 million people.

Dr Mahathir is accompanied by Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah, Works Minister Datuk S. Samy Vellu, Foreign Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen, Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Tan Tiong Hong, Deputy Trade and Industry Minister Haji Muhyiddin Yassin, Deputy Primary Industries Minister Megat Junid Megat Ayub and about 150 businessmen.