

Mahathir: Ties with Pakistan excellent

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Malaysia and Pakistan need to explore new areas for technical and economic co-operation, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

Dr Mahathir said co-operation between the two countries had been excellent.

"We are now left with the task of identifying weaknesses if any," he said at a dinner in honour of Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo at Seri Perdana tonight.

Dr Mahathir said both countries faced the same problem of inequities in international economic relations while aspiring to deliver the benefits of development to their own citizens.

"In our endeavours, we are beset with the rising threat of protectionism and the so-called solutions reached by developed countries at our expense without due regard to our needs."

Dr Mahathir said the developing countries of the South had responded to this by forming the South Commission, which is charting a framework for co-operation among developing countries.

He said developing countries had problems both from economic and political inequalities of the past which remained largely unresolved and the revolution of technology made the future even more unequal and precarious.

"Options are limited. In this context, it is comforting that Pakistan and Malaysia are in the vanguard of efforts within the Non-Aligned Movement and other affiliations to effect common positions to overcome problems affecting developing countries."

He said both countries held similar views on the foreign occupation of Kampuchea and Afghanistan, the Israeli occupation of Arab lands, apartheid and the Iran-Iraq war and the militarisation of the Gulf.

He praised Pakistan for playing an active role in the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and its role in promoting Islamic solidarity in economic, education and social fields.

"Your visit will strengthen our common resolve to bring progress and prosperity to our people and peace and security to our region," he said.

Mr Junejo was accompanied by his Culture, Sports and Tourism Minister Nisar Mohamed Khan, Industries Minister Shujaat Hussein and Punjab Chief Minister Mian Mohammad Nawab Shariff.

He will meet Trade and Industry Minister Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz, Malaysia's first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and the Pakistani community here tomorrow before returning home on Saturday.