

Dr M: We seek trade, not aid

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — ^(P) ^{3 2 AUG 1981} Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight criticised developed countries for their continued obstruction of efforts by developing countries to improve their economy.

The Prime Minister said these countries had attempted to hinder developing countries by constantly erecting protectionist walls under various guises.

"Developing countries seek more trade, not aid, and yet the walls of protectionism are constantly being erected against our exports," Dr Mahathir said at a dinner in honour of visiting Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa at Seri Perdana here.

Dr Mahathir said developing countries' efforts continued to be hamstrung by the "rich men's club" of the developed countries.

He cited as an example the "insidious and underhand" campaign

launched by those countries against Malaysia's palm oil and other tropical vegetable oils.

The Prime Minister said the principles of fair trade initially voiced by those developed countries should be upheld and not merely paid lip service to.

"The beggar thy neighbour policy of some developed countries does not serve the interests of the international economic system. Instability in the system is bound to have serious effects detrimental to the well-being of the community of nations," he said.

Dr Mahathir said developed countries must appreciate that the prosperity of developing countries must have beneficial effects on their exports and sale of their manufactured products.

On bilateral relations, he said Malaysia was ready to expand exchanges and co-operation with Sri

Lanka with which it had close co-operation in the cultural field, air and sea transportation as well as trade.

Mr Premadasa, who is here on a five-day visit, praised Malaysia's role in Asean. He said Sri Lanka had emulated Malaysia's example and was able to get together with friendly countries in South Asia to establish an association for regional co-operation.

Earlier in the afternoon, Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah received Mr Premadasa and Mrs Hena Wickrematunge Premadasa at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

Mr Premadasa was later given a full ceremonial welcome at Parliament Square.

Mr Premadasa will be granted an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong on Wednesday. He will leave on Thursday for Singapore.