

Mahathir pleased with outcome of overseas trip

From AHMAD A. TALIB: New York, Oct 6

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad says he is happy with the outcome of his trip that took him to West Germany, Belgium, London and Tokyo. He had the opportunity to meet leaders, businessmen, and journalists to discuss current issues and explain Malaysia's views on politics, investments and to exchange views on international affairs.

Yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir met former US Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger. They discussed a wide range of topics and the Prime Minister found the meeting stimulating and educational.

He said Dr Kissinger mentioned in passing the petition by the AFL-CIO to the US Congress seeking to remove Generalised System of Preferences privileges from Malaysia.

When asked whether Dr Kissinger, now no longer in government, would be able to influence US position on the matter, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this may be so but it is useful to have someone in America understand the issue and its possible implications on Malaysian economy and workers.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir told Malaysian newsmen before leaving for Tokyo yesterday morning that his meetings with the businessmen throughout the trip had offered him an opportunity to explain at length and in person the country's invest-

ment climate and incentives.

These businessmen were invited to cross check facts and to decide for themselves whether Malaysia is a good country to put their capital and technology into.

The same applies to his meetings with the journalists, he said, adding that they are now able to judge for themselves whether their reports are based on facts and are balanced.

In Tokyo, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir is scheduled to meet his Japanese counterpart, Mr N. Takeshita.

On political developments at home, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, said he, as Prime Minister and head of the Cabinet, approved the application by Transport Minister Datuk Dr Ling Liong Sik for six weeks' leave.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Datuk Dr Ling had met him just before the Prime Minister started his tour on September 18. Datuk Dr Ling said he was "tired and therefore wanted to take a rest", the Prime Minister added.

Bername adds: More than 40,000 people are expected to be at Terminal Two of the International Airport at Subang on Saturday to welcome home Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Among them will be members of Barisan Nasional component parties, Kemas, voluntary organisations and chambers of commerce from the Federal Territory, Selangor, Pahang,

Perak, Negri Sembilan and Malacca.

Selangor State Information Officer V.K. Arunasalam said today menteri besar, chief ministers and members of the Cabinet will be present.

He said the aircraft carrying the Prime Minister from Tokyo is expected to touch down at Terminal One at 3.50 pm.

Deputy Prime Minister Gharfar Baba, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib and Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat will receive the Prime Minister.

Mr Arunasalam said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir will then proceed in a motorcade to Terminal Two where 500 kompong beating youth will spearhead the welcome ceremony.

He will then walk to a special dais in front of the terminal building led by 500 bunga manggar bearers, 300 silat exponents, 500 kompong beaters, a group of Indian flutists and a Chinese lion dance troupe.

At the dais, three national sportsmen will present to the Prime Minister a Malaysian flag, Mr Arunasalam said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir will then impale the flag pole onto a giant-sized globe erected near the dais, a gesture which, according to Mr Arunasalam, symbolises Malaysia's achievements in getting world attention to specific international efforts.