

# United front vital, says Dr M

From K. Bala

BELGRADE, Mon. — The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) must continue to strive for a more just and equitable world by staying together and presenting a united front, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the Third World must be free to choose its own way of managing internal affairs without outside interference.

"We must not allow ourselves to be harassed by crusading movements which have now taken over

where the Government have become unacceptable.

"No one should have a monopoly on refining the definition of right and wrong," he said, adding that free people must be free to refine and redefine basic values themselves.

The Prime Minister was addressing the opening day of the ninth non-aligned summit which began at the Sava international conference centre here.

Earlier, Yugoslav President Dr Janez Drnovsek opened the four-day summit attended by leaders of

102 member countries.

In his 30-minute address (the time allotted to all speakers), Dr Mahathir touched on wide-ranging topics confronting NAM members and the world in general.

He spoke of the debt problem severely affecting many developing countries, the international political scene, the economic conflict between rich and poor nations, the environment, drugs, human rights and regional conflicts like Cambodia and Afghanistan.

On the debt problem of many developing and least developed nations — a topic which has been given high priority at this summit — Dr Mahathir said the only real solution to the crisis was to write off the debts.

The lenders must admit they were indiscreet and pay for it.

Commercial banks and Governments alike must accept the losses. The Governments of the rich countries would not become bankrupt because of it. And

their banks could still be rehabilitated.

The Prime Minister also touched on environmental issues which have affected Malaysia as well as crusaders using double standards.

Noting that the environment was being made a trade weapon, he said the thinning of the ozone layer was blamed on logging of tropical forests.

The fact that the burning of fossil fuels and release of fluoroocarbons into the at-

\* PLEASE TURN TO P2,  
COL 7

# Our critics are wrong, says Dr M

FROM PAGE ONE

mosphere occurred largely in the rich countries was largely ignored.

Also ignored was the logging of vast tracts of temperate forests, which was still going on although large areas had already been cleared over the centuries for development.

In the deserts of America, underground water was pumped up to water golf courses and create lakes, Dr Mahathir said.

Yet the water could easily reafforest the deserts to reduce the gases which destroyed the ozone layer and created the greenhouse effect.

Instead, poor countries were being forced not to extract wealth from their forests in order to keep the environment safe for the rich.

In Malaysia, he said a campaign was being waged by outsiders to force Penans to remain primitive on the ground that this was their right.

"That these people live a miserable life without the amenities that other Malaysians enjoy is not given any thought."

Describing the sympathy for the Penans as hypocritical, he reasoned that the so-called environmentalists were interested in the matter to prevent tropical timber from competing

with temperate softwood.

On trade, he said protectionism and unfair grading methods were creating havoc in the economies of the poor nations.

While subsidies in the Third World might result in countervailing duties by the rich, they themselves subsidised their industries to the point where overproduction was encouraged and the markets became saturated.

## Human rights

This has resulted in products from poor nations becoming unsaleable while surplus food was used to deprive the poor of their markets.

Referring to human rights, he said the developed countries had appointed themselves the arbiters of human rights.

"In the name of human rights they have applied all kinds of pressure on countries unable to defend themselves.

"Every now and then new forms of human rights are

invented and any country found defaulting is subject to vile publicity and other repressive measures."

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir yesterday met his Yugoslav counterpart Ante Markovic for 90 minutes.

They discussed Malaysia's plans to use Yugoslavia as the gateway for its manufactured products to south and east Europe.

In return, Yugoslavia could use Malaysia as the base for its goods to enter Asean countries, Japan, the Pacific Rim and the United States.

Briefing newsmen on the talks, Foreign Ministry deputy secretary-general Datuk Abdul Majid Mohamed said the proposal to use Yugoslavia as the link would enhance exports to Europe, especially to the Eastern bloc.

Most Malaysian goods were now shipped to Europe via Rotterdam.

Yugoslavia had good port facilities which could be used by Malaysia.