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Musa to have minister status, says PM

PORT KLANG, Tues. — Datuk Musa Hitam will enjoy full ministerial status as Malaysia's special envoy to the United Nations, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister added that there was no reason why Datuk Musa, the former deputy prime minister, could not be appointed with such a rank.

"Why not, I want to ask you ...?" he said to newsmen after launching a seamanship scheme for youths on board the government yacht *U.D. Tunas Samudera*.

Datuk Musa, the MP for Kota Tinggi, will leave for New York on Thursday.

On Sunday, he said he was happy to be able to serve the country as special envoy but declined to say whether his appointment carried ministerial rank.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said "the government would finance activities that mould Malaysian youths into a courageous lot and help steer them away from undesirable preoccupations.

Twenty-four trainee sailors are taking part in the inaugural scheme.

K.D. Samudera, an \$18 million brigantine (a two-mast sailing vessel) was built in November 1988 in the United Kingdom.

It was officially launched by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Azlan Shah and Queen Elizabeth II at the Lumut Naval Base in Perak Oct 16 last year.

Dr Mahathir later boarded and inspected the vessel before going on a short cruise in the North Klang Straits.

He was accompanied by Britain's Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Lord Brabazon of Tara and Education Minister Anwar Ibrahim.