

PM: Learn more from Japanese

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Malaysians have become more acquainted with the culture and lifestyle of the Japanese since the introduction of the Look East policy, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said many Malaysian students had received higher education and training in the "Land of the Rising Sun" and returned to Malaysia, not only fluent in the Japanese language, but gainfully employed in Japanese companies here.

"The opening of factories by Japanese investors has created employment opportunities for our youth while the presence of Japanese staff who manage these firms has allowed Malay-

sians to learn Japanese management skills and their high technology.

"Integration among Malaysian and Japanese families residing here has allowed them to gain first hand knowledge and learn about each others' culture and traditions," he said at the opening of the "Close-Up 1991" show at the Putra World Trade Centre.

Dr Mahathir said the Japanese people, although living in a country developed in terms of economics, science and technology, continued to place equal importance on their culture and traditions which dated back thousands of years.

In line with Japan's position as a major power since

World War Two, Dr Mahathir said, the international community has become more interested about Japanese culture and this has contributed to the proliferation of Japanese restaurants, departmental stores and hotels all over the world including Malaysia.

Malaysians, he said, have become skillful in *ikebana* and *origami*, like to eat Japanese food and enjoy Japanese television serials apart from taking to Japanese products.

This, he said, shows that Japanese products and services have found a place in Malaysian society.

He said constant exchanges of cultural programmes between Malaysia and Japan had helped to in-

troduce their cultures and traditions to each other's people.

He hoped that shows like the "Close-Up of Japan, Kuala Lumpur 1991" would help further improve understanding and rapport between people of both countries.

The show was sponsored by Mitsui Public Relations Committee and jointly organised by City Hall, The Japan Foundation and Yayasan Seni Berdaftar.

Before the start of the show, Madam Akiko Yahiro, wife of the chairman of the Mitsui public relations committee, Mr Toshikuni Yahiro, presented a \$100,000 cheque to Bakti president Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.