

# Bouquet for Tokyo's regional policy

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Prime Minister ~~Datuk~~ Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has commended Japan for its policy of strengthening relations between south-east Asia and itself.

Dr Mahathir said the policy formed part of the Fukuda Doctrine which spelt out Japan's approach to relations with south-east Asian countries.

The doctrine, created after the 1977 visit of then Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda at the end of an Asean tour, disavowed the role of Japan as a military power and pledged to co-operate with Asean countries to strengthen their solidarity and resilience, together with other like-minded nations outside the region.

The doctrine called for the consolidation of a relationship with Asean, based on mutual confidence, trust and a "heart-to-heart" understanding.

Successive Prime Ministers of Japan have reaffirmed Mr Fukuda's vision.

Dr Mahathir made this observation at a dinner held at Seri Perdana to mark the official visit of Mr Toshiki Kaifu.

"After the discussions which we had with you today, I am most pleased that you and your Government remain committed more strongly than ever to the goals of the Fukuda Doctrine.

"As a step forward, we also recognise the need for Japan and Asean to extend greater co-operation and assistance to all Asian States on the Pacific seaboard, to promote regional trade and solidarity.

"When we took the decision to develop closer ties with Japan almost a decade ago, we also envisaged that over a period of time, a new generation of Malaysian youths would be trained in the technology and ethics of Japanese industries.

"By these decisions, we opened the possibility of Japan as a focus of new learning to Malaysians in general," said Dr Mahathir.

"Thousands of our youths have in the last eight years been sent to Japan. Of these, nearly three thousand were supported by the Government of Malaysia.

"The results have shown that our Government student programme has contributed greatly to the economic development of the country and more significantly, it has generated goodwill and friendship between the peoples of Japan and Malaysia."