

Dr M: Pacific needs free an% open trading system

SANTIAGO, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that if the Pacific is to continue to surge ahead, a free and open trading system is a fundamental necessity.

He says Chile and Malaysia must pioneer new partnerships between the countries of the Pacific.

The Prime Minister was speaking at an official dinner given in his honour by President Patricio Aylwin to mark his six-day visit to Chile last night.

Dr Mahathir described the Pacific as the world's most dynamic growth centre. set to play a lead-

ing role in global politics and economics.

"The Pacific must evolve more fully into a basin of co-operation. It must not be allowed to become a cauldron of rivalry and unhealthy competition whether economic or political.

"Neither must it be made secondary to the interests of any particular nation."

The seven to 10 per cent growth registered by Malaysia and several other East Asian countries generated an enormous demand for goods and services.

He said there was no reason why Chile could not supply some of these goods and services and thus participate in East Asia's dynamic growth.

During the dinner Dr Mahathir and President Alwyn exchanged state awards.

Dr Mahathir was bestowed Chile's highest award, the Order to the Merit of Chile, while the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, conferred on the President the honorary **Darjah Utama Seri Mahkota Negara** which carries the title Tun.