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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 19, (Bernama) -- Malaysia fears world peace and stability will be affected if the Soviet Union returns to the style of administration that existed before President Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

Malaysia hoped the Soviet leadership would continue with the efforts of Encik Gorbachev in the interest of world peace and stability.

+We hope they will calm the situation at home and continue with the various efforts initiated by Gorbachev as they had pledged,+ the Prime Minister told reporters when asked to comment on the developments in the Soviet Union.

Malaysia hoped that the news that Gorbachev had been replaced on health grounds was true but if he had been toppled then this gave rise to several questions, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

+If they returned to the old style then it will make things difficult within the Soviet Union itself and in its relations with other countries. If this were to happen it will be most regrettable,+ the Prime Minister said after attending the 25th anniversary dinner of the Public Bank Eerhad here.

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On Britain's move to halt aid to countries with bad human rights record, the Prime Minister hoped it did not involve Malaysia and there was no reason for this country to be concerned over it.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir felt that the move should be implemented with care for it could bring about positive changes if imposed on cruel regimes but if it was resorted to merely for arm twisting to serve economic interest then it --gave rise to questions of principle. -- Eernama

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