

Dr M: No objection to tie-up with Indochina

KUANTAN: The Federal Government has no objection to Pahang and Terengganu forming a regional co-operation grouping with the developing Indo-chinese states, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"We encourage such councils," the Prime Minister said, adding that several other regional councils like the Johor-Singapore-Indonesia co-operation for the development of Batam island and the northern triangle comprising Kedah, Perlis, Penang and Perak had been formed.

Dr Mahathir said the Indo-chinese states of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, were fast developing and the Kuantan Port could be used as the supply base.

"Vietnam is involved in oil exploration while Cambodia and Laos are developing their construction industry and the port can be promoted for these countries to get their supplies," he told a press conference.

Earlier, the Prime Minister went on a helicopter ride for an aerial view of the development in Pahang and was briefed on

the progress by Mentri Besar Tan Sri Haji Mohamed Khalil Yaacob.

Dr Mahathir said the states had been encouraged to build more hotels to ensure that there were enough rooms for Visit Malaysia Year 1994.

He said that although there was a need to upgrade the communication facilities between the west and east coasts it should not be allowed to hamper the progress of the state.

He said he was happy with the state's development.

"Previously there were industrial sites without any in-

dustries but now there are many industries," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Government would engage a consultant to study the ecological effects of a dam in Tasik Cini.

"Tasik Cini has several natural features which could be harnessed to attract more tourists," he said.

To a question whether incentives will be given to investors in the east coast, he said there was no need to as investors were rushing to the area.

"The land prices are very high and there is difficulty getting the workforce," he said.