

DR M SPELLS OUT NAM'S NEW ROLE

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By WONG CHUN WAI
and ROHAIZAD RAHIM

JAKARTA: The Non-Aligned Movement must pool what little strength its members have to protect themselves from "a revival of western colonialism," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

In a hard-hitting speech at the NAM summit here, the Prime Minister said he was concerned over the growing trend towards arbitrary exercise of judgments and actions by those in a position to judge and execute.

"The NAM or at least this group of nations needs to protect itself from the unilateral definitions and impositions of the ideas which will shape the post-Cold War era."

"It is not a case of confronting anyone as we are not in position to confront. We need to protect ourselves and protection requires some strength," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the movement might have to rename itself to reflect its new role in a unipolar world.

"NAM must have a new set of principles. NAM must be given new objectives," he added (*see also Page 2*).

Dr Mahathir said in the field of economy, the independence of nations to decide their own policies were effectively curtailed.

He said new concepts such as intellectual property, local contents, free trade arrangements and selective discriminatory taxes restrict world trade and slow down economic growth of many countries.

"When once the internal affairs of a country is not to be interfered by another, now a right is claimed by the rich and powerful.

"While the weaker countries are not in a position to examine the record of

the strong, there is no limit to the judgment and subsequent incursions by the powerful."

Dr Mahathir said matters such as system of government, human rights practices, labour relations and law, and the environment came under the categories to be scrutinised by these powerful countries for unilateral actions.

Dr Mahathir said while the West touted the freedom of speech, it would not tolerate any criticism of its policies.