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Investing in

② *overseas trips.*

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From Balan Moses

DHAKA, Sun. — Malaysia will study the possibility of locating labour-intensive industries in Bangladesh in view of the vast pool of semi-skilled workers in that country, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said Malaysian businessmen facing a shortage of workers could invest in Bangladesh.

"Bangladesh will benefit in terms of investment while Malaysian entrepreneurs can expect to make profits from such projects," he told a brief Press conference at the Dacca Sheraton at the end of his three-day official visit to the country.

The Prime Minister and his delegation, which includes Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and a group of prominent businessmen, later visited the Export Processing Zone in Chittagong, nearly 800km away.

The Prime Minister and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali then left on a five-day official visit to Pakistan.

here while we have come to understand local government policy and bureaucratic processes to facilitate bilateral trade."

Dr Mahathir was also asked a host of questions on international issues including the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the role of the United Nations, the East Asian Economic Caucus and the linking of aid to human rights.

On the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said Malaysia and Bangladesh shared the view that the United Nations should find an effective solution to the issue.

He said both countries were disturbed by the brutality of attacks on Bosnia and urged an international solution to the horrors of ethnic cleansing.

Referring to the EAEC, he said it was not a trade bloc and was quite different from the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) or the single European market.

Rather, it was a response to protectionist policy adopted by the North and aimed at "keeping free trade free."

te labour-intensive industries
Bangladesh

Asked if Malaysia would accept the Bangladesh offer of professionals during bilateral talks yesterday, he said it would depend on whether such workers met Malaysian needs.

While Malaysia's need for foreign professionals was "fairly limited," it would try to get Bangladeshis if the need arose.

Abdullah had said yesterday that Bangladesh had offered to send doctors, nurses, engineers and accountants to Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir said other areas of bilateral co-operation could include enhancing training of armed forces personnel in either country and better communication between Kuala Lumpur and Dhaka.

He said defence co-operation in terms of training and exchange of equipment was an on-going exercise which could be upgraded.

Air travel between Kuala Lumpur and Dhaka needed improvement as the only airline flying the route was Bangladesh Airlines (BIMAN) with one flight a week.

Shipping facilities could also be improved through the extension of services by the Malaysian Shipping Corporation Sdn Bhd.

"The Malaysian businessmen in my delegation have established useful contacts

"The EAEC will counter these blocs, speaking with one voice if there are prob-

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lems to free trade. It will be more effective than an individual country asking for measures in the interest of free trade."

The Prime Minister also spoke on the need to restructure the United Nations with seats on the Security Council given to countries playing a major role in international affairs instead of nations that were the victors of the Second World War.

He reiterated Malaysia's stand that veto power should be abolished in the United Nations as it denied equal opportunity in the decision-making process.

In his speech at a State banquet last night hosted by Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Dr Mahathir said Bangladesh had become an important source of manpower in the industrial sector and plantations in Malaysia over the past two years.

He hoped Bangladesh would reciprocate the Malaysian effort in establish-

PLEASE TURN TO P2, COL 5

Promoting trade relations with Bangladesh

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ing the Malaysian Trade Centre in Dhaka.

The Prime Minister said a review of co-operation of projects under the Malaysian technical co-operation programme, both short and long term, was being carried out.

In this respect, Malaysia

was looking forward to co-operation with Bangladesh in the proposed establishment of the Bangladesh pilgrims management and fund-board modelled along the lines of Tabung Haji.

Khaleda, in her speech, said Bangladesh wanted economic co-operation with Malaysia in view of its impressive standard of socio-

economic growth.

She invited Malaysian entrepreneurs to take advantage of incentives and facilities in Bangladesh to invest and undertake joint ventures with Bangladeshi partners.

"It is our ardent hope that our export products be allowed to enter the Malaysian market at a preferen-

tial rate of duty, at least on par with competing products under the Asean trade preference scheme."

On South-South co-operation, she noted that Malaysia-Bangladesh relations were an example of such co-operation which could be emulated by other developing countries.