

POLICY REMAINS

Successor will stay on course, PM assures investors

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is confident his successor will not make any policy changes which may impede the nation's development.

"My successor is making the right noises and I believe that the policies (for development) will not be changed," the Prime Minister said during a dialogue during an international conference on *Malaysia: Powerhouse of the 90s* (see Page 2).

He said this in reply to a question if he was satisfied with his successor's ability to maintain the Government's economic development policies to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020 in the event of his retirement.

Dr Mahathir said his successor would understand the need to maintain the present policies.

"If he does change (the policies), I will come back and haunt him," he said in a lighter vein.

He dismissed suggestions that the nation's success was largely due to him. "There are also other ministers involved. We work as a team."

"Since the days of Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak, Tun Hussein Onn and then me, the policies have always been the same without any radical changes," Dr Mahathir said.

"The visible changes are probably in the style of administration but all else remains consistent."

To another question, Dr Mahathir said the present Government had succeeded in creating a stable political climate which was a boost in attracting foreign investors.

On his decision not to attend the informal Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders' meeting in Seattle, Dr Mahathir said the meeting was not likely to resolve the world's trade problems.

"I have decided not to go because I don't think the meeting can decide on substantial matters in one day as it will not be an exercise to resolve economic problems," he said.

"Furthermore, there is no proper agenda and I do not think my views on trade will help."

He also took a swipe at international labour leaders who needlessly goaded workers to demand higher wages.

"I ask these workers, if they demand higher wages to the extent that their employers go bankrupt, who do they (the workers) turn to? Is there a union for the unemployed?"

He said Malaysia's development plans had resulted in full employment which forced employers to compete for workers. This led to higher wages.