

# Get a move on, Dr M urges transport firms

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PORT KLANG: Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad wants Malaysia's transport services to improve on all fronts to meet rising demands in a booming South-East Asia.

Opening the MISC Trucking and Warehousing Services Sdn Bhd and MISC Container Services Sdn Bhd, the Prime Minister said while the economy in South-East Asia was picking up, the West was stagnant and some countries there were even facing a recession.

He said the Malaysia International Shipping Corporation's involvement in the transport industry indicated that Malaysians were becoming less dependent on foreign companies for their services.

However, MISC should be alert to developments in the transport industry overseas to remain competitive.

"I hope MISC will upgrade its programme to expand its fleet of ships to meet the increasing demands," Dr Mahathir said.

"This will make Malaysia more popular in providing efficient shipping services in the region and help reduce the outflow of foreign exchange."

He said the local transport industry was exposed to threats from the West, which was protective and practised "inward looking" policies to outclass others.

"To overcome the situation, we have to work

very hard and improve our efficiency," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that over the last two decades, the shipping industry had undergone changes in technology and organisation.

"This has helped to im-

prove the efficiency of transportation and shipping services on the whole," he said.

"We have to provide more space for ships to call at the port and, more importantly, we must pro-

vide them fast clearance," he said.

He said ships would go to ports in other countries if Malaysian ports did not provide efficient services, and this would affect the income of the country and its growth.