

Dr M: Renew Most Favoured Nation status to China

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has again urged the United States to renew the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to China, which has been criticised for its human rights record.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir

Mohamad said he was against linking the MFN or other trade preferences to politics.

To a question, the Prime Minister said that during his recent visit to China, he found Beijing hopeful that the United States would renew the MFN status.

China, he added, believed both countries

would lose if the status was not renewed.

"This is the first time China has said it needs the world as much as the world needs China.

"This is a very great departure from China's history in which it regards itself as the central kingdom (of the world)," he added after addressing corporate leaders from

the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) here yesterday.

Earlier at a question and answer session with PBEC participants, Dr Mahathir said China's strong government was the reason it would succeed economically.

He said while there were problems such as economic overheating,

high inflation, disparity between the coastal and interior areas, the Chinese Government was tackling these problems.

"You need a strong government to ensure that there will be no runaway inflation and unhealthy activities found in the economy," he said.

He gave credit to China for "making tremendous

changes" in economic and political areas.

He said to appreciate China the comparison must be made "between China now and what it was before" and not between China and other countries.

"It is certainly a more open country compared with what it was before," he said.

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