

Malaysia strives for racial equality, says Dr M

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MALAYSIA strives to provide equal opportunities to all races to create a conducive and harmonious environment, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here yesterday.

"Wherever we work, we like to see all the races in the country together. Whenever there is a problem, we look into them and try to resolve them," the Prime Minister said in reply to a question from a Taiwanese reporter.

Answering another question, he said Malaysia fully supported Taiwan's participation in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade as it was a big trading nation.

"However, on the question of Taiwan's participation in the United Nations, there are several questions which have to

be looked into and cannot be discussed at the moment," Dr Mahathir said.

To another question, he said state-owned Taiwanese financial institutions were allowed to invest in the financial institutions in Malaysia.

"Briefings can be arranged if the investors want to know more about Malaysia's financial policies," Dr Mahathir said.

On permanent resident status, he said the Government had given PR status to Taiwanese businessmen.

"All applications will be studied on a case-by-case basis and approval will be given based on its merits," Dr Mahathir said.

Dr Mahathir said Taiwanese investors could assist Malaysia to realise the goal of becoming a de-

veloped country by 2020 by providing more higher skilled technology training for workers, donating for civic activities and facilities for the workers and the people.

Earlier, in his speech at the opening of the **Ornas-steel** Enterprise Corporation — a RM1.2 billion Taiwanese steel plant in Air Kemh — he said Taiwanese investors had been given the wrong picture that the Chinese community in Malaysia were oppressed and were not allowed to live freely.

"Taiwanese investors who are here can see that there is no oppression of any race in the country," Dr Mahathir said, adding that certain policies were formulated to balance development.