

Malaysia hopes Japan will see benefits of forming EAEC

By Carolyn Hong

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Malaysia hopes that Japan in her wisdom and foresight will see the benefits of forming the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC) which is aimed at promoting open regionalism and a multilateral trading system.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that being a natural member of the region, Japan's participation in the EAEC would contribute greater dynamism to the region's economic development.

"We are seeing a rise in regionalism with three regions dominating the world economy — the European Union, North American Free Trade Agreement and

the East Asian countries which includes Asean.

"In an attempt to halt the trend towards exclusive economic groupings, Asean has adopted the concept of EAEC," Dr Mahathir said at a dinner in honour of Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama at Seri Perdana tonight.

He said Japan as a major economic power should assume a greater international role in the maintenance of peace and security within an improved United Nations system.

He said Japan's role and commitment would make a crucial difference in the face of discernible reluctance of major contributors among the Organisation for

Economic Co-operation and Development countries to support new peacekeeping operations either in terms of manpower or financial resources.

"The unprecedented increase in the number of peacekeeping operations around the world signifies the emergence of new crises after the Cold War. The substantial increase in demand and costs of the UN peacekeeping operations are breaching the limits of UN resources."

Dr Mahathir said at the Diet's (Japanese Parliament's) 130th session last month that the Japanese Government had expressed

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PM hails Tokyo's exemplary role

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a desire to play an active role in the international community as a nation of peace.

"We fully welcome Japan's aspiration in that direction. As a developing nation, we have emphasised the need for socio-economic development as against any politico-military arrangements as the foundation of peace and security in the region."

He said Japan had played an exemplary role in contributing much to the economic growth of the region and in acting as a source of development assistance.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was seeking a real economic partnership with Japan where benefits were equally shared as it was ready to benefit more directly from Japanese investments here in terms of technology transfer, management training and technical skills.

He said the cumulative sum of Japanese investments and business in Malaysia was the highest from abroad and had been greatly enhanced by excellent bilateral relations between the two countries.

He said Malaysia had looked towards Japan as one of the outstanding models of economic development in the East, particularly the ethics and technology that fuelled its success.

"The continuation of our 'Look East' policy, which has brought a better understanding between our two peoples, attest to the success of our mutual co-operation.

"We are grateful to Japan for the assistance and resources which have been extended so generously to us over the years."

Murayama, accompanied by his daughter Yuri Nakahara, arrived in Kuala Lumpur yesterday on a three-day official visit.