

PM: Little commitment

PETALING JAYA, Thurs. — Malaysia is happy with the Copenhagen Declaration calling for debt cancellation of the world's poorest nations but is disappointed with the lackadaisical attitude of some developed countries who are not committed to the cause, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said these countries sent only junior ministers to the United Nations World Summit on Social Development which was attended by heads of Government from all over the world.

He said while developing nations, including Malaysia, heeded the call by developed nations to attend the Earth summit in Rio de Janeiro to play an important role in discussions and solving environmental issues, this was not reciprocated in Copenhagen.

He said developing countries wanted the developed nations to be more committed towards assisting the poorer nations but unfortunately such commitment was not forthcoming.

"Developing nations did not ask for anything but participation of the developed countries in Copenhagen but it was obvious that the latter were not

interested in doing anything to help poorer nations overcome their poverty," he said, in response to Press queries on his return from the Copenhagen summit and a three-day visit to Britain.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was among Cabinet members, senior civil servants and others present

at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang to welcome Dr Mahathir.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia, which had successfully instituted many programmes to eradicate poverty, had the opportunity to exchange notes with some developing countries on the subject.

He said the discussions

also centred on the possibility of embarking on co-operative efforts among developing nations to help poorer nations overcome their problems.

Dr Mahathir said he had discussions with the Chancellor of Austria, Franz Vranitzky, and the country seemed to be the only European nation willing to cancel its loans to

poor countries.

On his statement in London that Malaysia was putting its recent trade problems with Britain behind once and for all, the Prime Minister said he gave an assurance to British industrialists that the two countries could continue to have close trade ties.

He said some of the in-

to cause

dustrialists wanted Malaysian companies to buy over a few British firms which would allow local goods to penetrate the European Union market more easily.

On former Deputy Prime Minister Ghafar Baba's statement that he wanted to return to active politics, Dr Mahathir said even when Ghafar was not in the Government, he had been active in politics including campaigning during elections.

He said he was confident that Ghafar's statement meant he wanted to participate in the general election as an Umno member.

Meanwhile, a *Bernama* report from London said yesterday Dr Mahathir spent six hours at Cambridge University where he said he was greatly honoured to be able to address the lecturers and students.

He was given prolonged applause by them when he finished his address on Asian values and the need for the West and East to understand and appreciate each other's values.

University Vice-Chancellor Prof Sir David Williams, who described Dr Mahathir as a true statesman, said March 15, 1995, would forever be etched in the annals of the university as a historic day for the

honour paid by Dr Mahathir in visiting Cambridge.

Later, when speaking to the 160 Malaysian students who through their academic excellence managed to enter the university, the Prime Minister said he had never thought that one day he would be given the honour to address the university.

Dr Mahathir spent two of the six hours at the university, touring its Engineering Department, where he was briefed on five research projects in which he had expressed a personal interest.

These include a computerised speech recognition software that will eventually make it possible for a computer or word processor to display the spoken word on-screen and make an immediate print-out.

The university said dramatic progress was being made by its research team.

The university is also researching catalytic converters which Malaysia is hoping to introduce in an effort to reduce pollution from motor vehicular emission.

Another area of research is on more efficient manufacturing through improving the basic science, technology and management of manufacturing.