

Dr Mahathir praises NAM as a vibrant movement

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has been a vibrant force in defending the independence of member countries since its inception.

The Prime Minister said NAM has been able to champion the cause of member countries for an equitable political and economic order.

He said the movement provided members with the strength and identity to steer them through complicated international relations that characterised the Cold War era.

He said the ability of NAM to remain true to its principles and objectives has placed the movement on a sound footing to meet the challenges of the post Cold War era.

The relevance of NAM as a forum for developing countries to defend and advance their interests has now assumed greater importance.

In this regard, Malaysia applauds the role Indonesian President Suharto in his capacity as chairman of NAM and for instilling greater solidarity in the movement.

Dr Mahathir said this is in a special message to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Asia-Pacific conference on April 24 at Bandung, Indonesia.

(The conference had issued the historic Bandung Declaration in 1955 to chart the struggle of newly independent countries which paved the way for the formation of NAM in 1961.)

The event will be held in conjunction with the three-day NAM's ministerial meeting of the co-ordinating bureau on April 25, according to a statement by Wisma Putra today.

The Government has appointed the country's permanent representative to the United Nations, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, as the special envoy to the meeting.