

22/02/1997

Deng's death a great loss to China and the world, says Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the death of China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping was not only a great loss to China but also to the world.

In a condolence message to his counterpart Li Peng, Dr Mahathir said he was saddened to hear of the death of Deng who was greatly admired as the main architect of China's drive towards modernisation and the "open door" policy.

"His innovative approach to China's development through his doctrine of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', bold vision and outstanding leadership were fundamental in charting the course of China's dynamic economic development," Dr Mahathir said in a statement.

He said China's burgeoning economy today was testimony of the resounding success of his pragmatic policies and that the late Deng was responsible for enhancing China's role in the maintenance of world peace and stability.

"His many visits abroad resulted in China's close relations, particularly with her neighbours in the East Asian region.

"The people of Malaysia recall fondly his memorable visit to Malaysia in November 1978 which paved the way for closer bilateral relations and co-operation between Malaysia and China."

Dr Mahathir extended his deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences, on behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, to Li Peng and members of the bereaved family.

(END)