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Dr M sees no substantial change in China's policies

"MY CONDOLENCES on the demise of a truly great man and a great leader of China and this world." This was what Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wrote in the condolence book, on the demise of China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

Speaking to reporters after signing the book at the Chinese Embassy in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, Dr Mahathir said, "There may be changes in style and form, but there will be no substantial change."

Dr Mahathir also said he does not expect to see any deviation from China's economic reforms following Deng's death.

Deng, considered to be the architect of China's economic reforms, passed away on Wednesday, just months short of seeing his dream of Hong Kong returning to mainland rule become reality.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's future relationship with China is expected to remain "as good as it is now, if not better" due to the good contacts which have been established with present Chinese leaders.

Describing Deng as a great leader of China who brought about changes that no other man would have been able to carry out, he said China will remember Deng's teachings and make a success of them.

Despite being incapacitated in the last few years, Deng's ideas and leadership were acknowledged and have influenced changes in China, Dr Mahathir said.

Embassy officials said hundreds of people have gone to the embassy to pay their respects since news of Deng's death was released.

The MIC also extended its condolences to China's leaders. Works Minister and party president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu signed the condolence book at the Chinese embassy yesterday.

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