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DR MAHATHIR THANKS JAPAN, CHINA FOR HELP DURING ECONOMIC CRISIS

By Khairdzir Yunus

TOKYO, June 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed appreciation and gratitude on behalf of the Malaysian people to Japan and China for the help extended during the economic crisis.

"It is vitally important for Malaysians not to forget the friends who have stood by us in our time of need."

"In this regard, I would like to place on record my appreciation and the gratitude of the Malaysian people for the helping hand that Japan extended through the Miyazawa Plan and many other ways."

"Japan has not been a fine-weather friend. Japan has been an invaluable ally. It has been a friend in time of grievous need. Many of us will never forget this for as long as we live," he told the international conference "The Future of Asia" here today.

Under the Miyazawa Plan, Japan would provide funds to aid recession-hit Asian countries.

The Prime Minister also thanked China which refused to devalue its currency even though such refusal rendered China's products to be less competitive than Southeast Asian products.

"China's growth was affected and unemployment increased but China was steadfast in not making matters worse for Southeast Asian nations," Dr Mahathir added.

--BERNAMA

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