

# 'Better opportunities from globalisation'

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## But humanitarian values must not be ignored: PM

The Prime Minister's presence charged up what would have been a typical mundane morning in Parliament as many government and opposition MPs jostled for the opportunity to ask him questions.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad fielded questions on globalisation, currency speculators and foreign economic interference, among others, with ease in front of TV cameras, usually banned from the House.

Mahathir said globalisation may provide better commercial opportunities, but its implementation has to take into account humanitarian values, the capability of developing countries to compete and the social responsibilities of developed nations over the lesser countries.

He told Wan Nik Wan Yusoff (PAS-Bachok) that when developed countries talk about globalisation, it results in borderless commer-

cial exploitation which disregards strategic geographical strengths and humanitarian values.

"Their aim is to gain profit with no consideration towards its effects on the people or economics of an affected country

"Furthermore, they blame the country's administration for not opening its market to borderless commerce."

To a supplementary question from Datuk Fadzil Nor (PAS-Pendang), Mahathir said Asean countries had supported Malaysia's proposal that the implementation of the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) agreement on the automotive industry be pushed to sometime between 2003 and 2005.

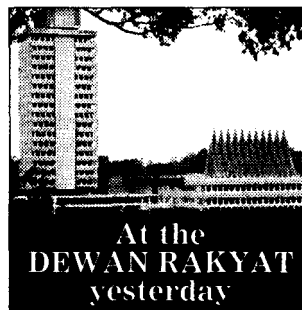
He also said that when the Afta agreement was signed, Asean countries were not aware of its disadvantages.

"When currency speculators wreaked economic havoc in the region, only then did these countries realise that globalisation might have a negative effect on them."

Mahathir said rich countries are aiming to control the world's economy, citing the automotive industry as an example.

"Only five car manufacturing companies can continue to exist. Others have to be shut down or taken over"

Mahathir also said there have been offers to purchase Proton, and that these particular companies said their more efficient systems can



enable Proton to be sold at a cheaper price.

"However we fear that after the takeover, Proton will be an assembly plant for their cars and will not manufacture our national cars."

Mahathir said that is one of the reasons why Malaysia is very cautious with foreign interference, adding that now the country has an advantage because it is not under the pressure of the International Monetary Fund.