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We're not playing godfather, says Dr M

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday said that Malaysia did not have a "system of godfather".

Dr Mahathir indirectly dismissed the claim by certain quarters that Malaysia wanted to be godfather to some African countries via smart partnership fora such as the Langkawi International Dialogue.

A senior Zimbabwean official was reported on Sunday as saying some European countries had accused Malaysia of wanting to play godfather to African nations.

Dr Mahathir said countries of the smart partnership movement took turns playing the leading role in hosting the smart partnership fora to help develop their economy.

"We are practically the host. So, naturally, the host country plays a bigger role. Mozambique had played the leading role. Similarly with Namibia and Zimbabwe.

"Uganda is beginning to become a godfather," said Dr Mahathir in jest.

Uganda is the host for the fourth Southern Africa International Dialogue next year.

Mozambique President Joaquim Alberto Chissano stressed that Western countries should have nothing to worry about because the LID and SAID were "not against anybody".

The movement hoped to find ways to make the world a better place, he said. The West and others could share their views with the movement.

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