

Be more orthodox and restrained, Asians urged

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that Asian countries should act as a kind of brake to slow down the acceptance of all new ideas promoted by the West.

Asians, he said, should be more orthodox and more restrained so that new ideas would not sweep the region off its feet.

"We should prove to the world that all the interpretation of the West is not necessarily the right ones, that we also have some contribution on ideas and everything else, especially on how to shape and administer our own society.

"I believe that Asians should embrace new ideas slowly as overnight changes are very unsettling and can destabilise the people.

"People who cannot cope with immediate changes can take to the street and demonstrate and push out one government after another and in the end there will be anarchy," he said when replying to a question during a dialogue session

with participants of the 10th World Economic Development Congress.

Dr Mahathir had earlier delivered a speech outlining Malaysia's position on globalisation and its impact on the developing world.

Responding to another question, Dr Mahathir reiterated that Malaysia was not totally against globalisation, but wanted its implementation to be carried out rationally and responsibly so that no country would be victimised for the sake of economic efficiency.

Speaking to reporters later, the Prime Minister said many countries agreed with Malaysia's stand on globalisation although most fear to make the backing openly.

"Many developing countries have told me on the quiet that they agree with Malaysia and that they want us to go ahead with what we are doing though they will not come out and state their support openly for fear that they will get into all kinds of trouble."