

Dr M: Malaysia's proposal on finance being accepted

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SHANGHAI: Malaysia is happy that many of its earlier proposals on finance, world trade and politics are being accepted, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We seem to be vindicated on every action that we are taking, including currency controls," he said at a press conference yesterday evening.

"It is much more accepted that we take action against people who disrupt the peace to the extent of putting people under the Internal Security Act. Bailouts are accepted and even within the World Trade Organisation, (it is largely agreed) there must be flexibility for people to implement (measures) according to their own capacity."

On his meeting with Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin, Dr Mahathir said President Putin was inclined favourably towards Yasser Arafat and Palestine but in view of the Russian Jews in Israel, he was careful.

One point that surfaced dur-

ing the Prime Minister's meetings with other countries is that it is difficult to pinpoint who the terrorists are.

"I gave them the example of the IRA being considered terrorists in Britain but not so by the US," said Dr Mahathir.

Ernest Bower, president of the US Asean Business Council, when met later by the press, said the meeting between Dr Mahathir and US President George Bush represented "a new chapter in Malaysia-US relations."

"It is a new relationship in which the two countries are getting together and trying to find ways to co-operate. It will take a lot of work and understanding," said Bower.

"My understanding of the meeting with Dr Mahathir was that President Bush reached out to the Prime Minister as a senior statesman of South-East Asia and asked for advice and co-operation, and also Malaysia's understanding."

"This meeting was a good signal of confidence," Bower

said.

Bower said to the American people, the Sept 11 terror attacks were as if "someone walked into their houses on a clear blue day and killed their children."

"The Prime Minister has good points but it is hard for Americans to understand his wisdom in a short period of time," Bower said.

Datuk Shahril Shamsuddin, president and CEO of the Sapura group, said Sept 11 was a tragedy and a strong message was to seek the truth and not just a perception of what that truth was.

Bower and Shahril agreed that more public relations work had to be done especially at government level and that more channels of communication should be opened.

Business-wise, they said, some of the targeted areas should be long-term stability, competitiveness and joint development and capacity building.