

# Manila should accept decision on islands: PM

SUN, 28 OCT 2001

PETALING JAYA, Sat: The Philippines should accept the decision of the International Court of Justice over the contested sovereignty of the islands of Ligitan and Sipadan. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We must accept the decision made by the court, even though sometimes the decision does not suit us," the prime minister said upon his return from South Korea and Japan at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base here.

Last week, the World Court rejected the Philippines' application to intervene in the case.

Malaysia's stand was that the claim on the islands was only between it and Indonesia, and did not involve the Philippines.

On the Apec meeting in Shanghai, China last week, Mahathir said it was better compared than previous years, as Malaysia was able to put forward many meaningful views.

He described his dis-

cussions with US President George W. Bush prior to the 21-nation meeting last Saturday as friendly.

On his trip to Korea and Japan, he said he was on a holiday and wanted to see Cheju Island, a resort built by Korea.

Mahathir said he wanted to see how the island had been developed, as well visit its botanical and indoor gardens, which contained various tropical and rainforest plants.

In jest, he also said he used his holiday to finish his office work which he found difficult to complete here.

"I managed to clear most of my files, wrote all my speeches and letters.

"It was a good holiday ... if I was here there is nothing much I can do in the office, because from morning till evening, people come and see me ... I can't even read my letters or write one, and I had to take a holiday in order to work," he said, laughing.