

PM: Malaysia to continue with affirmative actions

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia would continue with its affirmative action policies as they have not affected investments in the country.

He said that despite having such policies, Malaysia had grown much faster than other countries with only one ethnic group.

"So, this is not a factor," he said at a dialogue session with a group of 20 foreign journalists who covered the Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism, which ended here on Wednesday.

Dr Mahathir was asked whether Malaysia would consider relaxing some of the economic protection policies for

the Malays in order to attract more foreign investments from Taiwan.

He said that affirmative action measures were devised in favour of the people who were less able to compete economically than the rest.

"It is very essential because we want people to develop to the same level. We do not want one ethnic group moving very fast forward and becoming very, very rich while the others, very, very poor. When you have that, you are going to have the ingredients for an explosion," he said.

During the session, Dr Mahathir also said that certain Western values had inflicted a terrible amount of damage on the world, and Malaysia as well as the other countries had

the right to reject such values.

The Prime Minister said, for example, that the West conceived the ideas of communism and socialism only to abandon them later, leaving the people who adopted them in the lurch.

"And you know what happened. You abandoned those ideas and now those people who adopted them find their countries unable to develop because they have a subsidy mentality, they don't understand free market and so on,"

he said.

He also said he was not worried about the future of Malaysia when he was no longer around as a system of managing the country had been put in place. - Bernama