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PM refuses to name `rich' country

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has refused to reveal the identity of the country which he said had attracted a major investment away from Malaysia by offering US\$200 million and other perks to the corporation.

Speaking briefly to reporters on the sidelines of the Global 2002 - International Smart Partnership Dialogue yesterday, Dr Mahathir also refused to say whether he was referring to a neighbouring country.

Asked whether it was a neighbouring country, he would only say: "I don't know. I am not saying anything."

In his speech at the welcome on Thursday night, Dr Mahathir drew gasps and curious whispers from the audience when he revealed that the rich country offered US\$200 million to attract the investment away from Malaysia.

Without naming either the investment or the country, Dr Mahathir said there was no way that Malaysia could match such an offer.

In the speech which was almost entirely about economic terrorism, he said unless it was defeated the developing world would end up in the economic doldrums.

Dr Mahathir urged the developing nations to work together within their borders and between them to fend off economic terrorism.

On whether he would continue to participate in the Langkawi International Dialogue after his retirement, he said he would continue to do so as an ordinary participant.

Several leaders and participants have urged Dr Mahathir to remain an active participant after October next year when he is scheduled to retire.

"LID will continue," he said.