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The guest of honour, the Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, views photographs of Mahathir at an exhibition in conjunction with the Asia-Europe Eminent Persons Lecture Series.

## Asia will dominate the world: Dr M

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the high rate of productivity in Asian countries will see them overtake their European counterparts in the 21st century.

He said yesterday while European colonisation resulted in the acceptance and practice of many of their ideologies, the 21st century will see Asia playing a bigger role in competing and being more progressive than Europe.

"It's quite obvious that in the second half of the 20th century, Asia was making tremendous progress and was catching up with Europe

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and America," he said at the Asia-Europe Eminent Persons Lecture Series.

"It is expected that Asia will continue to grow and by the 21st century, Asia will dominate the world."

In his lecture titled "Asia and the 21st Century", Mahathir said Asian countries are ready to compete and exceed Europe in terms of innovations and new ideas.

Part of the reason Asian countries were able to progress faster was due to the high level of productivity of its workers, which he contrasted with European workers who valued their freedom more.

In the same way, countries like China that adopted Western capital-

ism for its economic development fared better than India which gives importance to democracy and socialism.

"This is one reason India is left behind compared to China who adopted capitalism only in terms of economics but in terms of politics, they adhere to the authoritarian rules," Mahathir said.

Asked if progress is at the risk of democracy, he said too much freedom and democracy can cause the priorities of the country to change.

"It can be a hindrance if a country decides to spend more time on democracy rather than develop the country. How can you develop your country when you spend time politicising?" he said.