

# DR M'S ADDRESS EAGERLY ANTICIPATED

## World and Japanese leaders looking forward to Nikkei Conference events



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**P**ARTICIPANTS in Nikkei's 25th International Conference on the future of Asia will give their full attention to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's keynote address today, which will kick off a line-up of events.

It is the prime minister's 21st appearance at the annual conference, which began in 1995.

Themed "Seeking a new Global Order — Overcoming the Chaos", it will likely touch on the trade war between the United States and China and its effects on Asia.

Dr Mahathir's keynote address and subsequent dialogue this morning are among the main

draws for participants to this year's conference.

World and local leaders, the business community and international media look forward to these events.

The 94-year-old leader is, for them, a symbol of the voice and strength needed by Asia in its effort to protect the region's economy from becoming victim to Western actions.

Perhaps the latest edition of the Nikkei Conference will be able to determine whether Asia is in need of a new order, which was based on its own mould, as it faced competition from Western economies.

Dr Mahathir will take part in the dialogue with participants after delivering his keynote address.

Nikkei's Osaka editorial headquarters editor-in-chief Sonoko Watanabe will act as the moderator for the dialogue session.

The Nikkei Conference gathers political, economic and academic leaders from around the Asia Pacific. The platform allows them to highlight views on regional issues and Asia's position on the world stage.

Among those who have confirmed their attendance are Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and Laotian Prime Minister Thongloun Sisolith.

Besides the US-China trade

war, which has led to uncertainties, the global community is affected by the race towards acquiring high-tech military assets.

Another point of contention is the fervour of several countries to protect their domestic industries from foreign competition through imposing taxes on imported goods.

The 2019 edition of the Nikkei Conference is an opportunity for well-known leaders such as Dr Mahathir, who frequently hold critical views, to delve into how Asian countries and companies need to act amid chaos in the global order.

At the same time, it must be noted that Dr Mahathir had attended the Nikkei Conference last year when he had only assumed the country's leadership for a month. It would be fitting for him to highlight Malaysia's latest policies.

Malaysian ambassador to Japan Datuk Kennedy Jawan said it might be difficult to predict what Dr Mahathir would say. He said the agenda of attracting investors and businessmen to explore new sectors should not be ignored.

Japan has high regard for Dr Mahathir's leadership, especially his Look East Policy, which was introduced on Feb 8, 1982. The policy, among other things, involved the adaptation of Japan's economic model in the administration.