

# Power-sharing govt has same goals

By Anna Chidambar

**Kuala Lumpur:** The political differences in the power-sharing government of South Africa should not deter foreign investments in the country, said its executive deputy president F.W. de Klerk.

"There are no major differences between the parties in the government as we are all working towards the same goals and aim to make a success of it," he said.

De Klerk who is on a three-day visit to Malaysia from Sunday gave this assurance when speaking to newsmen yesterday after addressing a function hosted by the Malaysian South-South Association (Massa).

He spoke on the topic *South Africa's Vision for the Future: Prospects and Opportunities for Malay-*

*sian Businessmen* before about 300 businessmen. In his speech, he said that all the parties in the Government of National Unity (GNU) had made a sincere and concerted attempt to reach consensus in the process of decision-making.

He said that parties do not caucus separately before the cabinet meetings and debates in the cabinet are usually "very open, pursued along non-party lines".

"My working relationship with President (Nelson) Mandela is also correct, frank and cordial. We work together for common objectives of the government though we remain political opponents and have different views on some matters," he added. There is no reason to be concerned about the continuity of effective government if President

Mandela were no longer able to lead the country, he stressed. The president's successors have all identified themselves with the policy direction that has emerged since last May and there is no reason to suppose that they would deviate from this course, he said.

There is an increasing acceptance of a form of privatisation for unlocking resources for the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RND) embarked upon by the GNU of the new South Africa.

De Klerk invited Malaysian participation in the republic's tourism and construction and building industries.

He also gave an assurance to foreign investors that other exchange controls will also receive attention.

Currently, investment policies also do not limit foreign participation. The

new South African government proposes to set up a mechanism to overcome obstacles and barriers in investments, he said.

Investment opportunities in both Malaysia and South Africa will be identified to boost bilateral economic ties, he added.

Malaysian businessmen could also tap the potential offered from the republic's bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games, he said. South Africa will host next year's Rugby World Cup tournament.

He said the country's two-tier exchange system will be abolished and will follow two guidelines:

➤ Foreign reserves must be able to tide over the immediate effects of the withdrawal of financial rand.

➤ Discount rates between the commercial rand and the financial rand will have to be narrowed down further than the present 30% to 8%.

*no major differences between the two parties*

## Indian Ocean rim proposal not restrictive, says de Klerk

By Rajeshpal Singh

**Kuala Lumpur:** The Indian Ocean rim co-operation grouping, mooted by South Africa, is not restrictive or protectionist and will not threaten existing regional economic structures.

South Africa's executive deputy president F.W. de Klerk, said yesterday the idea is to promote trade among nations bordering the Indian Ocean.

It is not an attempt to

"build a big structure like the European Union" with restrictive rules and regulations, he said.

The proposal would not threaten existing groupings such as the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec). He said he was heartened by the positive response to the proposal by both the Malaysian and Australian governments. De Klerk was in Australia on an official visit before arriving here. He leaves

for home today.

De Klerk discussed the proposal with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday. Australia has agreed to host an "exploratory conference", he said adding that this move would help to explain the proposal to participating countries.

He said by virtue of geography, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Pakistan, the

Gulf states, and South Africa were potential members. In his speech de Klerk had said the countries bordering the Indian Ocean comprised almost one-third of the world's population as well as much of its oil and strategic mineral reserves.

He said the idea did not originate with him, as reported earlier, but had been discussed within South Africa for some time.