

MAHATHIR-VIETNAMESE

28 P

PETALING JAYA, DEC. 4 (BERNAMA) — MALAYSIA IS NOT AT +WAR+ AGAINST THE ILLEGAL VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANTS WHOSE CONTINUOUS INFUX INTO THE COUNTRY IS POSING GRAVE PROBLEMS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI (DR.) MAHATHIR MOHAMMED, SAID TODAY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HOWEVER MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT GO ON BEARING THE BRUNT OF THE INFUX OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTED WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO ENTERED THE COUNTRY LEAVE. HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER ATTENDING A BRIEFING AT THE NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE HERE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA HAD BROUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO THE PROBLEMS SHE FACED PERTAINING TO THE VIETNAMESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS. — BERNAMA MORE 1608/ZCM

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HE SAID AS MALAYSIA WAS NOT IN A STATE OF WAR SHE COULD NOT TAKE DRASTIC STEPS LIKE SHOOTING AT THOSE WHO CONTINUED TO LAND INTO THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY DESPITE BEING ASKED TO STAY AWAY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA WAS +UNHAPPY+ WITH THE RESPONSE FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TOWARDS SOLVING THIS PROBLEM.

MALAYSIA, HE SAID, WOULD CONTINUE TO PERSIST IN TAKING STEPS TO PREVENT THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM COMING INTO THE COUNTRY.

SHE WILL ALSO ENDEAVOUR TO GET THIRD COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT THE VIETNAMESE IN ORDER TO LESSEN MALAYSIA'S BURDEN.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT INSISTED ON THE ILLEGAL VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANTS LEAVING THE COUNTRY BECAUSE IT POSED SEVERAL PROBLEMS AND IT HAD ALSO ANGERED THE PEOPLE LIVING ALONG THE COASTLINE.

MALAYSIA HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT THAT THE VIETNAMESE PROBLEM WAS NOT MALAYSIA'S MAKING AND THE CARTER GOVERNMENT HAD TO TAKE MORE POSITIVE STEPS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. — BERNAMA MORE 1610/ZCM

NO67: (F)

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HIT OUT AT POLITICAL PARTIES OUT TO GAIN +POLITICAL LEVERAGE+ FROM THE PROBLEM.

HE SAID THERE WERE SOME POLITICAL PARTIES TRYING TO INVESTIGATE THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OVER ITS TREATMENT OF ILLEGAL VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANTS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE ILLEGAL VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANT PROBLEM WAS NOT A PROBLEM WHICH COULD BE TREATED AS AN ELECTION PLATFORM.

IT INVOLVED THE SECURITY OF THE NATION AND THOSE WHO TRIED TO EXPLOIT THE SITUATION TO GAIN +POLITICAL LEVERAGE+ WERE PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF +ANTI-NATIONALS AND SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO HIT OUT AT SOME FOREIGN MAGAZINES WHICH ADOPTED +DOUBLE-STANDARDS+ IN THE REPORTING OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN MALAYSIA AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, WHEN ONE COUNTRY USED FENCES TO KEEP THE REFUGEES OUT, IT WAS IN ORDER BUT WHEN MALAYSIA TOOK STEPS TO SOLVE THE +REFUGEE+ PROBLEM, SHE WAS BLAMED BY THE WRITERS OF THE MAGAZINES FOR NOT ACCEPTING THEM. — BERNAMA 1614/ZCM

MAHATHIR-VIETNAMESE 4 PETALING JAYA (RE-OPENS ITEM 67) ๙๙๙๙

MEANWHILE, THE FINAL BATCH OF CANADA-BOUND VIETNAMESE FROM THE FREIGHTER HAI HONG SCHEDULED TO HAVE FLOWN OFF THIS AFTERNOON WILL NOW LEAVE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HERE TOMORROW BETWEEN 1 P.M. AND 2 P.M.

ACCORDING TO THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION HERE, TODAY'S FLIGHT WITH 125 PEOPLE ABOARD WAS POSTPONED BECAUSE OF BAD WEATHER IN MONTREAL.

SO FAR, 478 VIETNAMESE FROM THE HAI HONG, WHICH HAS BEEN ANCHORED OFF PORT KLANG SINCE NOV. 6, HAVE BEEN FLOWN FOR RESETTLEMENT IN CANADA.

ANOTHER GROUP OF 169 VIETNAMESE FROM THE SAME SHIP ARE DUE TO FLY OFF TONIGHT TO HANOVER ON THEIR WAY TO RESETTLEMENT IN THE WEST GERMAN STATE OF LOWER SAXONY.

THEY INCLUDE ONE-YEAR-OLD TWIN BABIES AND A 77-YEAR-OLD WOMAN, A WEST GERMAN EMBASSY SPOKESMAN SAID HERE.

AN EARLIER GROUP OF 163 VIETNAMESE HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED IN LOWER SAXONY. A TOTAL OF 657 OF THE HAI HONG PASSENGERS HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THAT STATE. — BERNAMA 1737/YF