

CHOGM - MAHATHIR

FROM ZAINOOR SULAIMAN

MELBOURNE, SEPT. 26 (BERNAMA) — (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAYS THAT THE COMMONWEALTH IS STILL WORTH PRESERVING BUT STRESSED THE NEED FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO DISCUSSIONS OF PROBLEMS AMONG LEADERS OF THE ORGANISATION.

IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A MELBOURNE DAILY, +THE AGE, + PUBLISHED HERE TODAY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE REALISED THAT THE COMMONWEALTH HAD CERTAIN BENEFITS AND THAT MALAYSIA NEEDED TO BE A MEMBER.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE COMMONWEALTH WAS NECESSARY BUT THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETINGS (CHOGM) AND THE ORGANISATION ITSELF.

IT WAS NOT SUFFICIENT THAT THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TALKED TO EACH OTHER BUT THEIR DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY +POSITIVE ACTION+, HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1625/MK

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR DESCRIBED OFFICIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND MALAYSIA AS +QUITE O.K.+ AND ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE ATTENDED THE SUMMIT EVEN IF IT WAS HELD ELSEWHERE.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT SOME ADVANCED COUNTRIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH HAD REDUCED THE NUMBER OF PLACES FOR MALAYSIAN STUDENTS, IMPOSED HIGHER FEES AND ADOPTED OTHER POLICIES WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS +UNDULY DISCRIMINATORY+.

HE SAID AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY, WHICH PUT +ALL KINDS OF QUALIFICATIONS ON PEOPLE WANTING TO IMMIGRATE THERE+ WAS ALSO A CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT IN MALAYSIA.

+THAT HURTS US A BIT, BECAUSE YOU TEND TO TAKE THE BEST OF MALAYSIANS. WE WOULD LIKE TOO THE UNEMPLOYED MALAYSIANS WHO WANT TO WORK AS LABOURERS, TO GO TO AUSTRALIA AND SETTLE DOWN THERE.

+THEY TOO WOULD LIKE TO GO, BUT YOU ARE TAKING AWAY THE DOCTORS, LAWYERS, ENGINEERS...+, HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1634/MK

NO58 (F)  
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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR RESERVED HIS STRONGEST CRITICISM FOR THE WAY THE MEDIA IN DEVELOPED COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES REPORTED EVENTS IN MALAYSIA.

HE SAID: +THERE SEEMS TO BE A DELIBERATE TREND TOWARDS NOT UNDERSTANDING THE POLICIES IN MALAYSIA, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE REPORTING THAT HAS BEEN DONE BY FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN MALAYSIA.+

+SOME ARE DEFINITELY ANTI-MALAY AND ANTI-MALAYSIA, ANTI-ALL OUR POLICIES.+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE HAD NEVER BEEN A GOOD WORD PUT IN ABOUT +OUR ACHIEVEMENT+ AND THIS COMING FROM FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH +HURTS OUR FEELINGS+.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID PRACTICALLY ALL WESTERN MEDIA WERE BIASED AND UNFAIR TO MALAYSIA AND MOST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH WERE FACING PROBLEMS WHICH DID NOT EXIST IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. — BERNAMA MORE 1636/MK

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HE SAID A CERTAIN DEGREE OF DISCIPLINE WAS NECESSARY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IF THEY WERE GOING TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING AT ALL.

+YOU ARE NOT GOING TO HAVE THE KIND OF LIBERALISM THAT IS PREVALENT IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OR YOUR WHOLE COUNTRY WOULD BE DESTROYED,+ HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, SECURITY MEASURES HAVE BEEN MOUNTED INCLUDING THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE BIGGEST AND MOST EXPENSIVE ANTI-TERRORIST OPERATION EVER LAUNCHED IN AUSTRALIA, AS HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS STARTED TO ARRIVE TO ATTEND THE NEXT WEEKS MEETING.

THE FIRST TO ARRIVE WAS ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT DR. KENNETH KAUNDA. QUEEN ELIZABETH II WHO WILL OPEN THE SUMMIT, IS DUE FROM LONDON TONIGHT.

ABOUT 2,000 DELEGATES INCLUDING OFFICIALS AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES FROM 44 MEMBER-COUNTRIES WILL BE ATTENDING THE 10-DAY MEETING. -- BERNAMA 1640/MK