

PM-VIETNAM

FROM K.C. LEONG

BANGKOK, AUG. 23 (BERNAMA) DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID TODAY THAT MALAYSIA WAS VERY CLEAR ABOUT THE DANGERS POSED BY VIETNAM BUT DID NOT FEEL THAT VIETNAM HAD THE CAPACITY TO POSE AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO MALAYSIA.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HIS STATEMENT IN JAKARTA RECENTLY THAT HE DID NOT CONSIDER VIETNAM A MAJOR THREAT TO US MERELY MEANT THAT IN TERMS OF MALAYSIA, WE ARE NOT GOING TO SEE TOMORROW THE WHOLE VIETNAMESE ARMY MARCHING INTO MALAYSIA.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE ERAWAN HOTEL HERE THIS EVENING FOLLOWING ALMOST TWO HOURS OF TALKS WITH THAI PRIME MINISTER GEN. PREM TINSULANOND AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON THIS MATTER, HE ADDED: +BUT WE UNDERSTAND THE CAPACITY OF THE VIETNAMESE TO CREATE A LOT OF PROBLEMS FOR THE REGION AND FOR THAILAND. WE ARE VERY CLEAR ABOUT THE DANGERS. +

ASKED WHETHER HE CONSIDERED THE VIETNAMESE ARMY POSED A THREAT TO THAILAND NOW, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THIS WAS FOR THAILAND TO CONSIDER AND HE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO SAY WHETHER IT WAS A THREAT OR NOT. ---BERNAMA MORE: 2130/HM

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HE ADDED THAT GEN. PREM HAD ALSO NOT SAID ANYTHING ON THE VIETNAMESE ARMY AND +SO I DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE FEELS ABOUT THE THREAT FROM THE VIETNAMESE ARMY. +

GEN. PREM HAD, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE VIETNAMESE IN KAMPUCHEA.

THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED THAT THERE IS NO CHANGE IN MALAYSIA'S APPROACH TOWARDS THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM.

+WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THINKING OF A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND NOT A MILITARY SOLUTION. + HE ADDED IN REPLY TO ANOTHER QUESTION ABOUT THE APPROACH TO SOLVING THE KAMPUCHEAN ISSUE.

HE SAID GEN. PREM HAD ALSO TOLD HIM ABOUT THE STOPOVER OF THE CHINESE PRIME MINISTER ZHAO ZIYANG HERE AFTER HIS VISIT TO MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE AND THE PHILIPPINES.

ON THE POSITIONS OF ASEAN AND CHINA TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM, HE SAID SOME COMMON GROUND HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AS EMERGED AT THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON KAMPUCHEA IN NEW YORK LAST MONTH. --- BERNAMA MORE 2135/HM

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+WE ALL BELIEVE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION; NEITHER THE CHINESE NOR ASEAN IS PLANNING ANY MILITARY MOVE. + DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

+WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS TO HAVE THE VARIOUS FORCES IN KAMPUCHEA COME TOGETHER AND WORK OUT A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND FORM A GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE KAMPUCHEAN PEOPLE.

+THE ONLY PROBLEM IN THE CASE OF CHINA IS THAT THEY ARE KEEN TO HAVE THE KHMER ROUGE ON THE ASCENDANCY BUT IN OUR CASE WE ARE NOT PARTIAL TO ANY PARTICULAR GROUP.

+WE WANT TO SEE THE GROUP THAT IS SUPPORTED BY MOST OF THE PEOPLE RUNNING THE COUNTRY. +

ASKED ABOUT CHINA'S ROLE IN SOUTH EAST ASIA, HE SAID ASEAN WAS THINKING OF CREATING THE ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IN WHICH CASE CHINA'S ROLE WOULD BE NIL, +PROVIDED OF COURSE THAT THE RUSSIANS AND THE AMERICANS ALSO HAVE NO ROLE IN THE SAME AREA. + --- BERNAMA MORE 2130/HM

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ASKED WHETHER MALAYSIA HAD RECEIVED ANY ASSURANCES FROM PREMIER ZHAO REGARDING CHINESE SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALAYA HE SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO ASSURANCE EXCEPT THAT CHINA STOPPED ALLOWING THE CPM TO BROADCAST FROM CHINA,

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE QUESTION OF THE NEW VOICE OF MALAYAN DEMOCRACY RADIO STATION REPORTEDLY BROADCASTING FROM SOUTH THAILAND WAS NOT RAISED DURING HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GEN. PREM.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE OUTFLOW OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS STILL ACCEPTING THEM AND ALLOWING THEM TO LAND ALTHOUGH IF NO THIRD COUNTRIES ACCEPTED THEM FOR RESETTLEMENT, +THEN WE WILL HAVE TO DO A BIT OF RETHINKING. +

ASKED ABOUT HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GEN. PREM ON MATTERS RELATING TO SECURITY ALONG THE COMMON BORDER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THEY HAD REITERATED THAT THEY WOULD CONTINUE THE SAME POLICY AND GUIDELINES TO HELP EACH OTHER OUT WHEREVER POSSIBLE AGAINST THE COMMON ENEMY AND COMMON THREATS. ---BERNAMA MORE 2142/HM

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ON THE SUBJECT OF THE MUSLIM INSURGENCY IN SOUTH THAILAND, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN HIM AND GEN. PREM THAT THIS WAS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM OF THAILAND.

+THAILAND DOES NOT WANT TO INTERNATIONALISE THIS PROBLEM AND MALAYSIA DOES NOT COME INTO THE PICTURE + HE ADDED.

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE HAD COME HERE NOT JUST BECAUSE IT WAS TRADITIONAL FOR A NEW LEADER IN ASEAN TO VISIT HIS FELLOW ASEAN LEADERS BUT ALSO TO ESTABLISH CLOSE PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH GEN. PREM.

THEIR MEETING WAS CONFINED TO THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS UNTIL THE END WHEN THEY WERE JOINED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS, TAN SRI GHAZALI SHAFIE AND AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIDDHI SAVETSI LA, HAD ENABLED HIM TO COVER A WIDE SPECTRUM OF ISSUES AND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND ATTITUDES ON VARIOUS ISSUES.

HE SAID THERE WERE SOME QUARTERS, SUCH AS THE COMMUNISTS, WHO DID NOT WISH TO SEE THE CONTINUED CLOSE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND THAILAND BUT HE STRESSED THAT THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ALLOW THIS RELATIONSHIP TO BE SOURED AND WOULD USE EVERY MEANS IN ITS POWER TO MAINTAIN THE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THAILAND.

HE AND GEN. PREM HAD ALSO AGREED TO KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER AND TO USE THIS METHOD OF CLOSE PERSONAL CONTACT TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEM THAT MIGHT ARISE.

-3?- 2146/HM