

NO60 (F)
PARLIAMENT-OPEC
BM

81 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 1 (BERNAMA) — MALAYSIA CANNOT ISOLATE ITSELF FROM THE DECISIONS OF OPEC TO RAISE OIL PRICES, THE DEWAN RAKYAT WAS TOLD TODAY.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD), SAID THIS WAS BECAUSE A LARGE QUANTITY OF THE OIL PROCESSED HERE WAS IMPORTED FROM OPEC COUNTRIES.

ALSO, THE PRICE OF OIL PRODUCED BY MALAYSIA WOULD DEPEND ON THE PRICE DETERMINED BY OPEC, HE SAID IN REPLY TO A WRITTEN QUERY FROM ENCIK CHAN TECK CHAN (INDEPENDENT-KOTA MELAKA) DURING QUESTION TIME.

NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN NOT LESS THAN FIVE STEPS TO PREVENT THE EFFECTS OF AN O OPEC OIL PRICE HIKE ON THE COUNTRY, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID.

—BERNAMA 1644/AN

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HE SAID THE STEPS INCLUDED REDUCING THE DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN IMPORTED OIL BY DEVELOPING OFF-SHORE GAS RESERVES, ECONOMISE ON KNOWN OIL RESERVES, CONTINUE WITH EFFORTS TO EXPLORE FOR GAS AND USE HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER.

ON OIL EXPLORATION, HE SAID PETRONAS PLANNED TO OPEN UP TWO NEW CONTRACT AREAS OFF SARAWAK THIS YEAR.

REPLYING TO ANOTHER QUESTION FROM ENCIK CHAN, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE QUESTION OF WHETHER MALAYSIA WANTED TO BE A MEMBER OF OPEC DID NOT ARISE AS THE CONTRY'S EXPORT OF PETROLEUM WAS STILL SMALL.

THIS POSSIBILITY ALSO DID NOT ARISE BECAUSE MALAYSIA WAS A NET IMPORTER IN 1978 AND ALSO MALAYSIA HAD NOT BEEN INVITED TO BECOME A MEMBER OF OPEC.

—BERNAMA MORE 1647/AN

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OPEC, HE ADDED, WAS AN EXCLUSIVE ORGANISATION CONSISTING OF 13 MEMBER COUNTRIES ONLY ALTHOUGH THERE WERE MORE THAN 60 OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD.

THE CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP OF OPEC INCLUDED ONE WHICH STIPULATES THAT A COUNTRY MUST PRODUCE AND EXPORT AT LEAST ONE PER CENT OF ITS TOTAL PRODUCTION OR ABOUT 600,000 BARRELS PER DAY.

REPLYING TO ENCIK LEE LAM THYE (DAP-KUALA LUMPUR BANDAR), DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT PLAN A NEW POLICY ON PRODUCTION BECAUSE THE PRESENT POLICY ENSURED THAT THE PEOPLE BENEFITTED FROM IT.

TO A QUESTION FROM ENCIK MUHAYIDDIN HAJI MOHAMAD YASSIN (BN-PAGOH), HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS NOT OBLIGED TO SUBSCRIBE TO ALL THE DECISIONS OF OPEC BUT WHEREVER SUITABLE AND WHEN THEY BENEFITTED THE COUNTRY, SOME DECISIONS WOULD BE FOLLOWED.

TO ANOTHER QUESTION FROM THE KOTA MELAKA MEMBER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD WHICH COULD PROMISE THAT THE OIL PRICE WOULD NOT GO UP THIS YEAR.

—BERNAMA 1651/AN