

N103: (F)
ASEAN-DIALOGUE

KUALA LUMPUR, JAN. 14⁸² (BERNAMA) -- THERE IS A NEED FOR ASEAN TO ADOPT AN IMAGINATIVE AND INNOVATIVE APPROACH IN PROMOTING DIALOGUE WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID GREATER ATTENTION SHOULD NOW BE GIVEN TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DIALOGUE, NOTING THAT ALTHOUGH SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN ACHIEVED, NO PROFOUND RESULTS HAD SO FAR EMERGED.

HE WELCOMED CURRENT EFFORTS TO REVIEW THE DIALOGUE WITH VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND URGED THAT PRIORITY BE FOCUSSED ON AREAS VITAL TO ASEAN INTERESTS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE 12TH ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS' MEETING HERE.

HE SAID THAT IN STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH EXISTING DIALOGUE PARTNERS, ASEAN SHOULD NOT PRECLUDE HAVING SOME FORM OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. -- BERNAMA MORE 1820/A1

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HE POINTED OUT THAT THESE COUNTRIES COULD BE NO LESS IMPORTANT DIALOGUE PARTNERS EITHER ON A SECTORAL BASIS OR INSPECIFIC AREAS OR ON THE BASIS OF REGIONAL GROUPINGS.

IN VIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE OF MOST ASEAN ECONOMIES, MIDDLE LEVEL TECHNOLOGY FROM COUNTRIES SUCH AS SOUTH KOREA AND INDIA WERE OF RELEVANCE.

+WE NEED TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION SO AS TO ENLARGE THE EFFECTIVE BASE OF ASEAN COOPERATION,+ DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID. -- BERNAMA MORE 1823/A1

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ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS, HE SAID ASEAN HAD MADE STRENUOUS EFFORTS TO HAVE CONTINUOUS COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS.

HE WAS CONVINCED THAT ASEAN PARTNERS WOULD JOIN MALAYSIA IN EXPRESSING DISPLEASURE AT THE FAILURE OF THE U.S. TO RATIFY THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL TIN AGREEMENT AND THE UNPRECEDENTED DECISION TO DISPOSE GSA TIN OUTSIDE THE U.S.

DESPITE DISAPPOINTMENT IN SOLVING COMMODITY PROBLEMS, ASEAN, HOWEVER, SHOULD CONTINUE TO ADOPT A COLLECTIVE APPROACH AND JOINT EFFORTS IN PURSUING OTHER INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE MULTIFIBRE ARRANGEMENT. -- BERNAMA MORE 1826/A1

MI06: (F)

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IN VIEW OF THE FAST DIMINISHING HOPES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN SEEING A MORE EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE WORLD'S WEALTH, IT HAD BECOME NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AMONG THEMSELVES.

ASEAN'S ACTIVITIES AND EFFORTS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD SO FAR PROVIDED AMPLE TESTIMONY TO THE GROUPING'S RESILIENCE AND SUCCESS AND SERVED AS A MODEL AND SHINING EXAMPLE TO OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC COOPERATION ALBEIT ON A SUB-REGIONAL BASIS, HE SAID.

TO STEP UP REGIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ASEAN'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE NEEDED A REVIEW TO IMPROVE IT EFFECTIVENESS IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES.

HE HOWEVER SUGGESTED THAT THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE ASEAN MACHINERY BE CARRIED OUT IN STAGES BECAUSE IT EMBRACED A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS.

FOR THE MOMENT, HE FELT THERE WAS NO REAL NEED TO CHANGE THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF ASEAN BUT WHAT WAS REQUIRED WAS TO STRENGTHEN THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT AND THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES. -- BERNAMA MORE 1832/A1

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A TOTAL OF 114 DELEGATES, INCLUDING SENIOR MINISTERS AND KEY ECONOMIC OFFICIALS FROM THE FIVE COUNTRIES, ARE ATTENDING THE THREE-DAY MEETING.

INDONESIA'S 31-MEMBER DELEGATION IS BEING HEADED BY MINISTER COORDINATOR FOR ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AFFAIRS PROF. WIDJOJO NITISASTRO. MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION INCLUDE THE MINISTERS OF TRADE AND COOPERATIVES, INDUSTRY, AND AGRICULTURE.

THAILAND IS BEING REPRESENTED BY A DELEGATION HEADED BY THE INDUSTRY MINISTER MAJOR-GENERAL CHARTICHAJ CHOONHAVAN. THE TEAM COMPRISES TWO DEPUTY MINISTERS AND 23 SENIOR OFFICIALS.

THE PHILIPPINES' 12-MEMBER TEAM LED BY MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY ENCIK ROBERTO ONGPIN INCLUDES MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING DR. PLACIDO MAPA JR. AND TWO DEPUTY MINISTERS.

SINGAPORE IS ALSO REPRESENTED BY A 12-MEMBER DELEGATION, HEADED BY TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER DR. TONY TAN.

HOST COUNTRY MALAYSIA IS REPRESENTED BY THE BIGGEST DELEGATION OF 33 HEADED BY TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN WHO HAS BEEN ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING.

MEMBERS OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION INCLUDE PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTER DATUK PAUL LEONG, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE DATUK MANAN OTHMAN, AND MINISTER OF ENERGY, TELECOMMUNICATION AND POST DATUK LEO MOGGIE. -- BERNAMA 1836/A1