

MAHATHIR - FRASER

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KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 3 (BERNAMA)-- MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA CAN LOOK FORWARD TO CLOSER AND BETTER BILATERAL RELATIONS AFTER RESOLVING +MINOR MISUNDERSTANDINGS+, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HERE TODAY.

+AFTER HAVING TALKED THINGS OVER WE FOUND THAT THE PROBLEMS THAT WE HAVE WERE VERY MINOR AND WE CAN EASILY SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS,+ HE TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AFTER THE SECOND AND FINAL ROUND OF TALKS WITH HIS AUSTRALIAN COUNTERPART, ENCIK MALCOLM FRASER.

+FROM NOW ON IT WILL BE MUCH EASIER FOR US TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT CROP UP,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT, ON THE WHOLE, THE VISIT AND THE TALKS HAD RESULTED IN GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S PROBLEMS OR MISCONCEPTIONS.

+I EXPECT THAT IN FUTRE, RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA WILL BE VERY MUCH IMPROVED IT IT HAS NOT IMPROVED ALREADY,+ HE ADDED. --MORE
2028/AH

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID DURING THEIR TWO-HOUR TALKS THIS EVENING, THEY COVERED SEVERAL ISSUES -- TRADE, REGIONAL PROBLEMS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA.

ALSO PRESENT AT THIS EVENING SESSION WERE THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, DATUK MUSA HITAM, FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER, TAN SRI GHAZALIE SHAFIE, AND TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN.

ON THE WHOLE, HE SAID, BOTH SIDES AGREED ON ALL THE ISSUES WHICH WERE DISCUSSED.

HE DESCRIBED ENCIK FRASER'S VISIT AS MOST USEFUL IN CLEARING UP A NUMBER OF MINOR MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND BOTH NOW SAW MUCH MORE CLEARLY HOW TO OVERCOME WHATEVER LITTLE PROBLEMS THEY HAD.

ASKED ON THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MOST OF THEM WERE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THE ATTITUDE OF THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS.

+WE HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH THE GOVERNMENT BUT THERE ARE SOME AUSTRALIANS WHO LIKE TO TELL US WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING WITH OUR COUNTRY AND HOW WE SHOULD RUN IT BETTER AND I THINK WE CAN DO WITHOUT SUCH ADVICE.+ HE SAID. --MORE 2033/AH

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HE SAID ONE OF THE CAUSES OF THE MISUNDERSTANDING WAS THE ATTITUDE OF THE AUSTRALIAN PRESS AND IF THEY WOULD CORRECT THIS, MALAYSIA WOULD HAVE BETTER RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA.

ON THE KAMPUCHEAN ISSUE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA HAD EXPLAINED TO ENCIK FRASER THE ROLE IT PLAYED TO PROMOTE A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE KAMPUCHEAN CONFLICT.

+HE APPEARED TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SOLUTION NOW THAT WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO TALK TO HIM,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR EXPLAINED TO ENCIK FRASER THAT PROVIDED EVERYTHING WAS PROPERLY DONE, THE KHMER ROUGE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DOMINATE THE COALITION GOVERNMENT.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE ENCIK FRASER TO SUPPORT ITS POSITION ON THE KAMPUCHEAN ISSUE WHEN HE MEETS CHINESE LEADERS IN PEKING TOMORROW.

SAID TAN SRI GHAZALI SHAFIE: +I THINK IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE CHINESE WILL ASK ENCIK FRASER TO SUPPORT THE COALITION GOVERNMENT.+ --MORE 2044/AH

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE REASON FOR AUSTRALIA'S RESERVATION OVER THE COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS BECAUSE OF THE INCLUSION OF THE POL POT GROUP.

+AUSTRALIA'S LOCATION IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM MALAYSIA -- WE ARE VERY CLOSE TO THE SCENE WHILE AUSTRALIA IS FAR AWAY,+ HE SAID. +SO I WOULD EXPECT THAT THERE WOULD BE A DIFFERENCE OF PERCEPTION BETWEEN MALAYSIAN AND AUSTRALIAN LEADERS.+

+AT LEAST ENCIK FRASER HAS SOMETHING TO TAKE BACK TO CONSULT WITH HIS COLLEAGUES,+ TAN SRI GHAZALI ADDED. --BERNAMA 2047/AH