

MAHATHIR-ANTARTICA

PH

82 (10)
KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 4 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMED TODAY CLARIFIED THAT HIS CALL FOR UNINHABITED ISLANDS TO BE INTERNATIONALISED DID NOT INCLUDE THOSE IN THE WATERS OF THE MALAYSIAN CONTINENTAL SHELF.

THE UNINHABITED ISLANDS IN MALAYSIAN WATERS REMAINED MALAYSIAN AND WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE CALL MADE AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HE SAID.

"I WAS REFERRING TO THOSE UNINHABITED ISLANDS LIKE ANTARTICA UNILATERALLY CLAIMED BY SOME COUNTRIES," SAID DR MAHATHIR ON ARRIVAL HERE FROM LONDON AFTER ATTENDING THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN NEW YORK.

HE SAID THE CALL WAS FOCUSED ON ANTARTICA BECAUSE IT WAS VERY LARGE AND UNINHABITED.

HE SAID THE UN DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE SHOULD INTERNATIONALISE ANTARTICA INSTEAD OF LEAVING IT UP FOR GRABS BY INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES.

HE SAID THE CALL ALSO COVERED THE SEABED IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS AS AGREED TO AT THE RECENT LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE.

THE CALL, HE SAID, WAS MADE BECAUSE SOME COUNTRIES HAD SENT MILITARY EXPEDITIONS TO LAY CLAIMS IN ANTARTICA.

HE SAID SMALL NATIONS LIKE MALAYSIA COULD NEVER HOPE TO SHARE THE WEALTH THAT LAY BURIED IN ANTARTICA BECAUSE IT DID NOT HAVE THE MILITARY CLOUT. -- BERNAMA 2355/SZ