

MAHATHIR-TRADE
FROM IDZAN ISMAIL

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SUVA (FIJI), OCT. 13 (BERNAMA)---(DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD STRESSED MALAYSIA'S READINESS TO LEND SUPPORT TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION IN OPPOSING THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE PROTECTIONISM POLICY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID: "I UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF THE SMALL NATIONS BUT THE BIG AND POWERFUL COUNTRIES SHOULD OPEN THEIR MARKET AND THIS MEANS THEY SHOULD NOT PRACTICE PROTECTIONISM."

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS ON ARRIVAL HERE TO ATTEND THE THIRD COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT REGIONAL MEETING WHICH OPENS TOMORROW, HE CLARIFIED THAT MALAYSIA DID NOT HAVE ANY TRADE PROBLEMS WITH NEW ZEALAND.

IN VIEW OF THIS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REITERATED HIS CALL TO THE WEALTHY NATIONS LIKE AUSTRALIA TO EXTEND THE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE DEVELOPING NATIONS.

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ACCORDING TO THE REPORT NEW BARRIERS IN TRADE WHICH WAS RAMPANT AMONG THE DEVELOPED NATIONS PROVIDED A BARRIER TO THE EXPORT OF MANUFACTURED GOODS FROM DEVELOPED NATIONS AND THIS IS A FORM OF DISCRIMINATION THE REPORT ADDED.

IN VIEW OF THIS, THE REPORT URGED THE SITUATION TO BE RECTIFIED AND BRING IT UNDER THE INTERNATIONALLY AGREED RULES OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE (GATT).

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR CRITICISED DEVELOPED NATIONS WHICH STILL REFUSED TO RATIFY THE LAW OF THE SEA CONVENTION.

HE DESCRIBED THEIR ACTION AS UNFAIR AS THEY WERE MAXIMISING THE BENEFITS GAINED FOR THEIR OWN COUNTRIES INTEREST ONLY.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES THAT HAVE NOT RATIFIED THE CONVENTION.

TO A QUESTION ON WHY HE DECIDED TO COME TO THE CHOGRM MEETING THIS YEAR, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID: "I COME TO MEET MY OLD FRIENDS HERE IN THE COMMONWEALTH... THERE ARE TOO MANY LEADERS GATHERING IN THE COMMONWEALTH SUMMIT AND A SMALL GATHERING SUCH AS THIS WOULD BRING MORE BENEFIT."

HE SAID HE CAME WITH AN OPEN MIND CLARIFYING THAT HE HAD NEVER SAID THAT THE COMMONWEALTH WAS NOT MEANINGFUL.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR BELIEVED THAT MANY SMALL NATIONS WOULD ATTEND THE CHOGRM MEETING AND A COMMON APPROACH COULD BE MADE AND HE WAS INTERESTED TO FIND OUT HOW MALAYSIA CAN WORK TOGETHER WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE PACIFIC REGION.

--BERNAMA 1921/HM

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ON KAMPUCHEA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA WOULD TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHORE UP SUPPORT FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA LED BY PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK.

"THIS IS ONE OF THE ISSUE WHICH MALAYSIA WILL BRING UP AT THE CONFERENCE AS THE COALITION GOVERNMENT ISSUE SHOULD BE GIVEN DUE SUPPORT," HE STRESSED.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT IF MALAYSIA PUT FORWARD THE ISSUE AT THE CONFERENCE, SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER ENCIK LEE KUAN YEW WILL BACK IT STRONGLY.

SINGAPORE WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES INSTRUMENTAL IN UNITING THE THREE ANTI-VIETNAMESE FACTIONS OF SIHANOUK, SONN SANN AND KHIEU SAMPANH WHICH SAW THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT TO FORM THE DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA COALITION GOVERNMENT.

ON THE SUBJECT OF PAKISTAN'S READMISSION TO THE COMMONWEALTH FOLLOWING ITS WITHDRAWAL IN 1972, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA DID NOT OPPOSE IT.--MORE 2035/HM

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HE ADDED MALAYSIA HAD NO OBJECTIONS IF PAKISTAN WAS TO BE READMITTED AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND MALAYSIA WOULD READILY AGREE TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT IF IT WAS PUT FORWARD AT THE MEETING.

THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL, ENCIK SRIDATH RAMPHAL, HAD EARLIER SAID THE PAKISTAN ISSUE WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED AT THE SUMMIT TOMORROW AS IT WAS NOT IN THE AGENDA.

HOWEVER, HE DID NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF IT BEING A SUBJECT OF INTEREST AMONG THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WHEN THEY HELD INFORMAL GATHERING AT A RETREAT IN PACIFIC HARBOUR THIS WEEKEND.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO TOLD REPORTERS HE BROUGHT ALONG SEVERAL BUSINESSMEN TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF HAVING A JOINT TRADING WITH FIJI.

HE SAID FOLLOW-UP ACTION WOULD DEPEND ON THE BUSINESSMEN WHO WOULD LOOK INTO THE AVENUES WHERE BILATERAL BUSINESSES COULD BE CARRIED OUT.

AMONG THE BUSINESSMEN NOW IN FIJI ARE ENCIK TAN KOON SWAN FROM MULTI-PURPOSE HOLDING'S DATUK KHOO KAY PENG FROM MALAYSIAN UNITED INDUSTRIES, DATUK SALLEH YUSOFF FROM PERMIRA HABIB AND ENCIK ROBERT KUOK AND BEAU KUOK FROM THE KUOK GROUP.--BERNAMA 2040/HM