

MAHATHIR-BRITISH

FROM IDZAN ISMAIL

82  
SUVA (FIJI), OCT. 15 (BERNAMA) -- THE "DON'T BUY BRITISH GOODS" DIRECTIVE TO ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES WILL REMAIN IN FORCE UNTIL BRITAIN CHANGES HER ATTITUDE. (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE HERE THAT ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH HAD NOT CHANGED MUCH SINCE THE DIRECTIVE WAS ISSUED ON OCT. 1 LAST YEAR.

IN VIEW OF THIS, THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD STILL NOT BUY BRITISH IF IT COULD HELP IT.

HE CLARIFIED THAT THE DIRECTIVE APPLIED ONLY TO GOVERNMENT BODIES AND DEPARTMENTS, AND THAT THE PEOPLE WERE FREE TO BUY BRITISH PRODUCTS IF THEY WANTED.

-- MORE 1615/LK

MAHATHIR-BRITISH 2 SUVA (FIJI)

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID BRITISH GOODS HAD BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE NOW WITH THE DROP IN THE VALUE OF THE POUND AS COMPARED WITH THE MALAYSIA RINGGIT.

THE BRITISH POUND WAS MUCH STRONGER WHEN THE DIRECTIVE WAS ISSUED BUT AFTER ITS VALUE HAD DROPTED VIS-A-VIS THE RINGGIT, BRITISH GOODS HAD BECOME CHEAPER AND MUCH MORE COMPETITIVE, HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, MALAYSIA AND BRITAIN WERE STILL MAINTAINING THEIR LINKS, HE ADDED: "WE HAVE OUR HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON WHILE THE BRITISH HAVE THEIR HIGH COMMISSION IN KUALA LUMPUR."

-- MORE 1650/LK

MAHATHIR -BRITISH 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO LASHED OUT AT BRITAIN FOR "RELEGATING THE COMMONWEALTH TO THE BACKGROUND" SINCE JOINING THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EEC)

+THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE BRITISH FOR THE EEC HAD EXCEEDED INTEREST TOWARDS THE COMMONWEALTH," HE SAID, REFERRING TO HIS SPEECH THIS MORNING REGRETTING THE ACTIONS OF THE PRIME MOVER OF THE COMMONWEALTH WHICH HAD RESULTED IN THE COMONWEALTH LOSING SOME OF ITS CLOUT IN RECENT YEARS.

ON HIS OPINION OF THE CHOGRM, HE JOKED: +IT IS USEFUL IN TERMS OF MY EDUCATION. I AM NEW TO THE GAME.+

HE SAID HE CAME TO THE CONFERENCE BECAUSE HE PERSONALLY KNEW ALL THE LEADERS ATTENDING IT AND ALSO BECAUSE OF MALAYSIA'S CLOSE COOPERATION WITH SOUTH PACIFIC COUNTRIES.

+I DO NOT LIKE CROWDS BUT I LIKE INTIMATE SMALL GATHERINGS WHERE WE GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER AND DISCUSS FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO FOSTER CLOSER COOPERATION WITH EACH OTHER.

+BIG INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS LIKE THE UN OR THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT SUMMIT NEAR JUST MAKING A SPEECH AND THEN BACK TO YOUR SEAT AND THE TIME TO KNOW EACH OTHER IS ONLY BY RUBBING SHOULDERS AT COCKTAILS.+ HE SAID. --BERNAMA 1602/HM