

CHOGRM - MAHATHIR - COOPERATION
FROM IDZAN ISMAIL

83
SUVA FIJI, OCT. 15 (BERNAMA) -- /DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR
MOHAMAD SAID THERE WAS A NEED FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE ASIA-
PACIFIC REGION TO COOPERATE AND ASSIST EACH OTHER ON A REGIONAL
BASIS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE COMMONWEALTH LEADERS
IN THE REGION IN PARTICULAR SHOULD FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION ON
COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOURS IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

SPEAKING DURING THE DISCUSSION ON 'REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND
FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION' DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE BELIEVED
THAT ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES COULD BENEFIT FROM THE ASEAN EXPERIENCE
WHERE THE GROUPINGS HAD MADE GREAT STRIDES IN ITS ECONOMIC
INTEGRATION PROGRAMME.

ASEAN, HE ADDED, WAS IN FACT PROMOTING ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AMONG ITS MEMBERS IN VIRTUALLY EVERY AREA OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY,
INCLUDING AMONG OTHERS IN ENERGY, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION,
BANKING AND FINANCE AND AGRICULTURE.

'WITH ITS MAJOR FOCUS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION, ASEAN
HAS NOW DEVELOPED AS A SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL GROUPING WHICH HAS
ATTAINED POSITIVE RESULTS NOT ONLY IN ECONOMIC AREAS BUT ALSO
IN EFFORTS TOWARDS REGIONAL STABILITY. -- BERNAMA 1325/MB

NO 77
CHOGRM-MAHATHIR - COOPERATION 2 SUVA (REOPENS ITEM NO55)

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR POINTED OUT THAT REGIONAL ECONOMIC
AND FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION 'STANDS OUT AS THE MAIN THRUST OF
CHOGRM, MORE SO WITH THE DIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRIES OF THIS
REGION WHERE EACH COUNTRY IS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT.'

'AT ONE END THERE IS THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES SUCH AS
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND WHILE AT THE OTHER END, THERE ARE NEWLY
INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC.'

HE SAID IN BETWEEN THESE TWO EXTREMES, THERE WERE MORE
ADVANCED BUT STILL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

'THIS SITUATION PROVIDES US A REAL CHALLENGE AND POTENTIAL
FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION AMONG
COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES IN THE REGION,' HE ADDED.

PAST CHOGRM MEETINGS IN SYDNEY AND NEW DELHI HAD RECOGNISED THE
POTENTIAL ECONOMIC AND FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC
REGION AND IN PURSUANCE OF THIS OBJECTIVE, HAD ESTABLISHED
CONSULTATIVE WORKING GROUPS ON ECONOMIC MATTERS SUCH AS TRADE
AND ENERGY, INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THESE GROUPS
CLEARLY MANIFEST THAT THERE WERE VARIOUS FUNCTIONAL AREAS IN
A NUMBER OF FIELDS IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WHERE COMMONWEALTH
COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOURS WERE POSSIBLE.

-- MORE 1520/LK

NO80: (F)
CHOGRM-MAHATHIR - COOPERATION 3 SUVA

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO STRESSED THE NEED FOR CONCERTED AND CONTINUED EFFORTS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES IN THE BUILDING UP OF THEIR NATIONAL RESILIENCE AND INDEPENDENCE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ALTHOUGH THE COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES IN THE AIBA PACIFIC REGION HAD ALWAYS RECOGNISED THE PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF THE SMALL ISLAND MEMBER STATES ESPECIALLY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, MORE COULD BE DONE THAN WHAT HAD BEEN DONE SO FAR.

HE APPEALED TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION TO JOIN IN THESE ENDEAVOURS.

"WE ARE FULLY CONCIIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THE PIECEMEAL EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, INCLUDING MALAYSIA, TO ASSIST THE LESS FORTUNATE AMONG US, SUCH AS THE SOUTH PACIFIC COUNTRIES, WILL NOT GENERATE AS RAPID AND IMPROVEMENT AS THESE COUNTRIES NEED."

"HOWEVER, IF CONCERTED AND CONTINUED EFFORTS WERE MADE IN THIS DIRECTION, I AM POSITIVE THAT WE WOULD HAVE GONE A LONG WAY TO HELP THESE COUNTRIES." HE ADDED.

-- MORE 1526/LK

NO81: (F)
CHOGRM-MAHATHIR - COOPERATION 4 SUVA

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REGARDED THE CHOGRM MEETING AS TIMELY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF LEARNING WHAT PROJECTS THE ISLAND COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC HAVE FOR THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT.

HE SAID THE REGION COULD THEN CONSIDER WHAT CONCERTED ACTION OR ASSISTANCE WOULD BE NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT THE PROJECTS TOWARDS THEIR SELF-SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT COULD HAVE A FAIR START.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA HAD SEEN THE NEED FOR THE INJECTION OF GREATER ASSISTANCE TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES TO ENABLE THEM TO BUILD UP THEIR NATIONAL RESILIENCE AND INDEPENDENCE.

"ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA HERSELF IS DEPENDENT ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ACCELERATE HER PACE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, IN A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION, SHE HAS LAUNCHED A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME TO ASSIST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH ARE LESS FORTUNATE THAT SHE IS."

UNDER THE PROGRAMME MALAYSIA HAD PROVIDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO A NUMBER OF SOUTH PACIFIC COUNTRIES INCLUDING FIJI, WESTERN SAMOA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ASSURED THAT MALAYSIA WOULD CONTINUE TO RENDER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO A NUMBER OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE CHOGRM AREA WITH PRIORITY OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO AREAS THAT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY BENEFICIAL TO THESE COUNTRIES.

-- BERNAMA 1530/LK