

MAHATHIR - VIETNAM
FROM MUSA SCULLY

(EMBARGO: FOR RELEASE AT 10.30 PM MALAYSIAN TIME TODAY)

83
COLOMBO, APRIL 21 (BERNAMA) -- (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD WARNED TONIGHT THAT VIETNAMESE TRANSGRESSION OF THAI TERRITORY INFLECTING CASUALTIES ON THAI FORCES AND CIVILIANS WILL HAPPEN AGAIN AS LONG AS HANOI CONTINUES WITH THE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA AND RESISTS UNITED NATIONS' CALLS FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION.

SPEAKING AT A BANQUET GIVEN BY SRI LANKA PRESIDENT J.R. JAYEWARDENE HE REITERATED HIS CALL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ASK FOR AN IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY ACTIONS ALONG THE BORDER AND TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM KAMPUCHEA.

THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE AGAINST UN RECOGNISED GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA AND HELPLESS CIVILIAN KHMERS WAS DEPLORED, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WHO IS HERE FOR A THREE-DAY VISIT, CALLED FOR SRI LANKA'S SUPPORT TO +OUR EFFORTS+ TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION.

HE SAID: +YOUR GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR OUR EFFORTS IS HIGHLY VALUED AND APPRECIATED+. -- MORE 2025/MB

MAHATHIR - VIETNAM 2 COLOMBO

HE SAID THE VIETNAMESE OPERATIONS ALONG THE KAMPUCHEAN-THAI BORDER THREATENED TO SPILL OVER INTO THAILAND AND RAISE A SPECTRE OF WAR IN THE REGION AND INVITE BIG POWER INVOLVEMENT.

HE GAVE SUPPORT TO SRI LANKA'S EFFORTS TO CONVENE THE UN CONFERENCE ON THE DECLARATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE.

HOWEVER, THE CONTINUED VIETNAMESE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA POSED A SERIOUS OBSTACLE TO THE REALISATION OF MALAYSIA'S CONCEPT OF ZOPFAN - ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY.

NOTING THAT BOTH COUNTRIES WERE COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT, HE SAID THE MOVEMENT COULD NOT HOPE TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES IF THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES AND MEMBERS OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT BECAME INVOLVED IN BIG POWER CONFLICT OR +BY THEMSELVES COMMIT ACTS OF AGGRESSION WITH SUPPORT FROM THE BIG POWERS+.

HE SAID THE MOVEMENT HAD A BIG ROLE TO PLAY IN THE FACE OF INCREASING BIG POWER COMPETITION AND THE ARMS RACE.

HE SAID MALAYSIA HAD A HIGH REGARD FOR SRI LANKA'S INVOLVEMENT IN PROMOTING A REGIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION IN THE REGION. -- MORE 2035/MB

ZCZC N188 (F/S)

MAHATHIR - VIETNAM 3 COLOMBO

PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE, IN HIS SPEECH, RECALLED INSTANCES OF +COMMON IDENTITY AND PURPOSE+ BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES.

HE PAID TRIBUTE TO THE MALAY COMMUNITY HERE WHO HAD DISTRINGUISHED ITSELF IN VARIOUS WALKS OF PUBLIC LIFE AND MAKING A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY.

+THESE STRONG COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE HAVE PRODUCED SOME OF OUR ABLEST LEGISLATORS., DOCTORS, LAWYERS AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL MEN AND SPORTSMEN.+

HE NOTED THAT MALAYSIANS OF SRI LANKA ORIGIN ALSO MADE A DISTINCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRY.

HE DESCRIBED DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S VISIT AS A FURTHER STEP FORWARD IN THE LONG HISTORY OF THE COMMON ENDEAVOURS 'BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES AND A CONCRETE EXPRESSION OF CLOSE FRIENDSHIP AND WILLING COOPERATION.+

HE SAID THE VISIT CAME AT A TIME WHEN FRESH WINDS OF CHANGE WERE BLOWING OVER THE ASIAN REGION WHOSE PEACE AND STABILITY HAD BEEN IMPERILLED BY EVENTS IN KAMPUCHEA.

+NEW HOPES AND NEW EXPECTATIONS ARE BEING CREATED BY THE WILLINGNESS OF COUNTRIES TO ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE AMONG THEM ON VARIOUS ISSUES+.

THE SOUTH ASIAN FORUM INITIATIVE AND ITS MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS THIS YEAR, PAVED THE WAY FOR ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. -- BERNAMA 2058/MB