

MAHATHIR - CONFERENCE

83 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 7, (BERNAMA) -- ASEAN COUNTRIES MUST CONTINUALLY FIND ALTERNATIVES TO THE TRADITIONAL APPROACHES OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN SOLVING PROBLEMS, PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY.

HE ADDED: +WE NEED TO PLAN AND DEVELOP SOLUTIONS TO OUR COMMON PROBLEMS BASED ON OUR REGIONAL EXPERIENCES AND RESOURCES.+

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MALAYSIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY, WAS OPENING THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS/RED CRESCENT LEADERS OF ASEAN.

THE FIVE-DAY CONFERENCE IS BEING ATTENDED BY MANY DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES INCLUDING PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHORN OF THAILAND.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT WAS THROUGH INTERACTION AND COOPERATION OF ASEAN ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES THAT COMMON PROBLEMS AND ASPIRATIONS COULD BE APPRECIATED. -- MORE 1158/MK

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE CONFERENCE DEMONSTRATED THE RELATIONSHIP AND CONCERN OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES ON A PEOPLE TO PEOPLE BASIS.

THE PRIME MINISTER ADDED THAT HE WAS GLAD TO NOTE THAT THE ASEAN RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES CONTINUED TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE VARIOUS FORMS OF COUNTER-DISASTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES, MAINLY THROUGH DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RELIEF.

THE SUFFERINGS OF PEOPLE AFFLICTED BY THE USE OF NEW WEAPONRY, OR EVEN THE MISUSE AND ABUSE OF DRUGS, NEGLECT OF SAFETY PRECAUTIONS IN FACTORIES AND PLANTS AND WIDESPREAD CRIME AND BRUTALITY WITH SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS, HAD BROUGHT OUT A NEW AND COMPLICATED ROLE FOR THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT, HE ADDED.

INDEED THERE WERE MORE AND MORE AREAS THAT NEEDED THE SERVICES OF THE RED CROSS, RED CRESCENT AND OTHER VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID. -- MORE 1230/MK

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT WHEN ASEAN COUNTRIES FACED THE PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE IN THE LATE SEVENTIES, THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES DEMONSTRATED TO THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS CERTAIN SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF COPING WITH THIS NEW PROBLEM.

THE CONFERENCE WHICH WAS THE FIRST TO BE HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR, HAD CHOSEN A THEME WHICH ALLOWED IT TO ADOPT A FORWARD-LOOKING VIEW WHICH COULD PROVE VERY REWARDING AND STIMULATING FOR EVERY PARTICIPANT, HE ADDED.

THE THEME +THE ASEAN APPROACH FOR RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES IN THE EIGHTIES,+ SHOWED HOW SENSITIVE THE MOVEMENT WAS TOWARDS ADJUSTING TO THE NEW DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGING REALITIES, HE SAID.

EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE VISIT OF PRINCESS SIRINDHORN BESIDES BEING A HISTORICAL EVENT WAS YET ANOTHER EXPRESSION OF THE STRONG BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP AND CORDIAL RELATIONS THAT EXISTED BETWEEN THAILAND AND MALAYSIA.

OBSERVERS FROM JAPAN AND BRUNEI ARE ALSO ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE. -- BERNAMA 1234/MK