

MAHATHIR-EDITORIAL

FROM SYED IMRAN ALSAGOFF ^{by}

RAWALPINDI, MARCH 22 (BERNAMA) -- THE LARGEST CIRCULATION NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY, THE PAKISTAN TIMES, SAYS THAT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMMAD'S VISIT TO PAKISTAN IS LOOKED FORWARD TO WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM.

IN AN EDITORIAL, IT DESCRIBED THE PRIME MINISTER AS AN INSPIRING LEADER OF MALAYSIA WHO IS NOT FROM THE-RULING CLASS AND SPENT HIS EARLY CAREER SERVING THE MASSES AS A MEDICAL DOCTOR.

THE NEWSPAPER SAID THAT WHEN PRESIDENT ZIA-UL-HAQ -VISITED MALAYSIA IN 1982, A REMARKABLE PERSONAL EQUATION WAS ACHIEVED BETWEEN HIM AND DATUK SERI DR' MAHATHIR.

THE EDITORIAL SAID PAKISTAN AND MALAYSIA, BOTH MUSLIM STATES, HAVE LONG SHARED POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS AT WORLD AND REGIONAL LEVELS AND HAVE EMBARKED TOGETHER ON A PERIOD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN A DIFFICULT INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF RECESSION AND HIGH INTEREST RATES.

REFLECTING THE PRAGMATISM OF THEIR APPROACH TO BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE TWO LEADERS SANCTIONED THE SETTING UP OF JOINT PAKISTAN - MALAYSIA COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHICH HAS, SINCE 1982, SUCCEEDED IN DESIGNATING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE TWO COUNTRIES CAN TRADE FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT.

-- MORE 1618/LK

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THE NEWSPAPER SAID PAKISTAN AND MALAYSIA HAVE A HISTORY OF COOPERATION AT INTERNATIONAL FORA LIKE THE UNITED NATIONS. IT SAID MALAYSIA SUPPORTS THE STAND TAKEN BY PAKISTAN ON THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN CREATED IN THE WAKE OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION THERE AND COUNTENANCED THE EFFORTS BEING MADE INTERNATIONALLY TO SEEK A PEACEFUL NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS WHICH HAS EXILED THREE MILLION AFGHANS ON PAKISTAN'S TERRITORY.

IN AN ANALOGOUS INCIDENCE OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN KAMPUCHEA, PAKISTAN SUPPORTED THE STANCE TAKEN BY MALAYSIA WITHIN ASEAN WHICH DEMANDS THE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS FROM KAMPUCHEAN SOIL.

ON THE WEST ASIAN SITUATION, BOTH COUNTRIES FIND THEMSELVES IN ACCORD OVER THE ARAB CAUSE AND HAVE PARTICIPATED AT THE UN AND OTHER FORA TO OPPOSE ISRAEL'S AGGRESSION AGAINST ITS NEIGHBOURS.

THE PAKISTAN TIMES ADDS THAT BOTH MALAYSIA AND PAKISTAN LENT THEIR VOICES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BRING TO AN END THE UNFORTUNATE IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT AND THE WAR IN LEBANON.

-- MORE 1632/LK

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MEANWHILE, PAKISTANI OFFICIALS SAID THAT DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT PAKISTAN IS LIKELY TO OFFER THE SALE OF COMPLETE CEMENT AND SUGAR PLANTS AS HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE IN BANGLADESH AND INDONESIA.

MALAYSIA HAS RECENTLY BOUGHT 50,000 TONNES OF RICE FROM PAKISTAN AND PAKISTAN HAS BEEN A STEADY CUSTOMER FOR MALAYSIAN PALM OIL.

PAKISTAN CAN ALSO OFFER TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES.

FURTHER AREAS IN WHICH TRADE CAN BE PROMOTED ARE BEING EXPLORED FOR EXAMPLE PAKISTAN MAY BE ABLE TO OFFER LARGE QUANTITIES OF FRESH FRUIT.

THE OFFICIALS SAID IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A PLANT FOR PROCESSING PALM OIL MAY BE JOINTLY ESTABLISHED IN KARACHI.

A TIN PLATE MANUFACTURING PLANT, TO BE SET UP JOINTLY IS ALSO UNDER STUDY.

BERNAMA 1635/LK