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B E440 AAE
MAHATHIR - KAMPUCHEA

(P)

PHUKET, MAY 17 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL REACTION FROM VIETNAM REGARDING THE +PROXIMITY TALKS+ WHICH MALAYSIA PROPOSED AS ANOTHER POLITICAL APPROACH TO RESOLVE THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS, HOWEVER, OPTIMISTIC THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME RESULTS IF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED IN FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WOULD PRESS FOR THE TALKS.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE HERE, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MALAYSIA DID INDICATE TO THE SOVIET UNION ON THE NEED FOR SUCH TALKS WHEN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ENCIK KADIR SHEIKH FADZIR WAS IN MOSCOW RECENTLY.

ALTHOUGH PRESS REPORTS SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS WILLING TO CONVEY THE IDEA TO VIETNAM, OFFICIALLY VIETNAM HAD NOT REACTED TO IT, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS HERE FOR TALKS WITH HIS THAI COUNTERPART, GEN. TUN PREM TINSULANONDA, ON BILATERAL COOPERATION AND REGIONAL MATTERS YESTERDAY. -- MORE
1940MST 17 05 85

MAHATHIR - KAMPUCHEA 2 PHUKET

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE +PROXIMITY TALKS+ FORMAT HAD BEEN TRIED IN EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ISRAELIS AND ARABS AND THE ONE BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN.

IT HAD ALSO BEEN SUGGESTED AS AN APPROACH TO RESOLVE THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR, HE SAID.

HE SAID MALAYSIA, IN PROPOSING SUCH TALKS, BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR SUCH AN APPROACH IN A SITUATION WHERE THE TWO CONFLICTING PARTIES DID NOT RECOGNISE EACH OTHER AND YET THERE WAS A NEED FOR THEM TO DISCUSS CERTAIN MATTERS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT BY THAT PROPOSAL MALAYSIA WAS NOT TRYING TO MAKE CONDITIONS BEFORE HAND BECAUSE +IF WE START IMPOSING CONDITIONS, WE MIGHT NOT EVEN GET TO THE TABLE.+ -- MORE
2003MST 17 05 85

MAHATHIR - KAMPUCHEA 3 PHUKET

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA DID NOT WANT A MILITARY SOLUTION AND THUS A POLITICAL SOLUTION, SUCH AS THE +PROXIMITY TALKS+, MUST BE EXPEDITED AND GET STARTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF ALL PARTIES IN KAMPUCHEA AGREED TO IT.

ASKED WHETHER THE IDEA OF +PROXIMITY TALKS+ WAS SIMILAR TO THAT OF A NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT EVENTUALLY WHEN PEACE WAS BROUGHT BACK TO KAMPUCHEA THERE MUST BE SOME FORM OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS NOT TRYING TO SAY THAT ONE SIDE SHOULD STAND ASIDE SO THAT THE OTHER SIDE COULD TAKE OVER.

+THIS WAS NOT MALAYSIA'S APPROACH AND, BASICALLY, THE KAMPUCHEAN PEOPLE SHOULD LIVE UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF THEIR OWN CHOICE.+

ASKED WHEN HE WOULD VISIT THE THAI-KAMPUCHEAN BORDER AS HE WAS EARLIER REPORTED TO BE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, THE PRIME MINISTER, IN LIGHTER VEIN, SAID: +ONE DOES NOT ADVERTISE THE DATE TO VISIT SUCH PLACES+. -- BERNAMA

2019MST 17 05 85