

D479

B E428 AAE
MAHATHIR-INDONESIA

KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 8 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY HE DOES NOT THINK THAT INDONESIA'S DECISION TO SUSPEND LANDING RIGHTS FOR AUSTRALIAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT WILL AFFECT MALAYSIA'S DEFENCE LINKS WITH CANBERRA.

YESTERDAY, AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER BILL HAYDEN IN EXPRESSING SURPRISE AT THE DECISION HAD SAID THAT THE SUSPENSION COULD DISRUPT TRAINING EXERCISES WITH MALAYSIA.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE (RAAF) MIRAGE FIGHTERS AND ORION RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT PASS THROUGH INDONESIA EN ROUTE TO THE BUTTERWORTH AIR BASE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +I DON'T THINK IT'S A COMPLETE BAN,+ ADDING THAT HE ALSO DID NOT THINK IT WOULD AFFECT THE FIVE-POWER DEFENCE ARRANGEMENT. THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DEFENCE ARRANGMENT ARE NEW ZEALAND, BRITAIN AND SINGAPORE.

SPEAKING TO NEWSMEN AT HIS OFFICE HERE AFTER HIS RETURN FROM THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) SUMMIT IN HARARE, HE SAID THAT ALL INDONESIA HAD SAID WAS THAT IT WOULD ASSESS THE CASES INDIVIDUALLY.
-- MORE.

1813MBT 08 09 86

D493

U E432 AAE
MAHATHIR-INDONESIA 2 KUALA LUMPUR

INDONESIA TOLD THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY ON WEDNESDAY THAT RAAF AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO LAND +FOR THE TIME BEING+.

THE DECISION REPORTEDLY WAS BELIEVED TO BE A TIT-FOR-TAT REACTION BY INDONESIA FOLLOWING ADVERSE REPORTS BY THE AUSTRALIAN +SYDNEY MORNING HERALD+ ON ALLEGED BUSINESS DEALS BY PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S FAMILY AND ASSOCIATES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE SUSPENSION WOULD NOT AFFECT THE JOINT AIR EXERCISES WITH AUSTRALIA AS AIRCRAFT NOW COULD FLY LONGER DISTANCE.

MEANWHILE, ACTING CHIEF OF AIR FORCE MEJ JEN (U) DATUK SHAHRUDIN MOHAMED ALI WAS REPORTED IN A DAILY TABLOID TODAY AS SAYING THAT THE RMAF HAD NO IMMEDIATE JOINT EXERCISES WITH THE RAAF.

UNDER THE FIVE-POWER DEFENCE ARRANGEMENT, TWO EXERCISES ARE SCHEDULED EVERY YEAR WITH THE NEXT ONE TO BE HELD IN A FEW MONTHS.

-- BERNAMA

1835MST 08 09 86