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MAHATHIR-FOREIGN
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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 18 (BERNAMA) -- UMNO PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE UMNO-LED GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE PRIORITY TO ASEAN AS A REGIONAL PACT THOUGH THE OBJECTIVE OF ESTABLISHING A COMMON MARKET HAS YET TO BE ACHIEVED.

MALAYSIA WOULD CONTINUE COOPERATING WITH INDONESIA, THAILAND, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM AND SINGAPORE BUT THE EXTENT OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINES WOULD BE DETERMINED AFTER THAT COUNTRY HAD FORMULATED ITS NEW CONSTITUTION.

OPENING THE 37TH UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE, HE SAID IT WOULD BE IN ORDER FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO REITERATE ITS POLICIES INCLUDING ITS FOREIGN POLICY AS THE COUNTRY HAD ONLY RECENTLY FORMED A NEW GOVERNMENT.

ON SINGAPORE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA WAS READY TO CONSIDER THE REPUBLIC'S REQUEST FOR HELP IN WATER SUPPLY BUT ITS RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER TO SINGAPORE WOULD NOT BE AT THE EXPENSE OF ITS OWN INTERESTS.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO MAKE A DETAILED STUDY OF MALAYSIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMONWEALTH TO ASCERTAIN THE BENEFITS FROM SUCH MEMBERSHIP AND COMPARE IT WITH BRITAIN'S RELATIONSHIP, ESPECIALLY WITH NON-COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES.

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1445MST 18 09 86

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MALAYSIA, HE SAID, NEEDED FRIENDS OF THE SAME STANDING AS IT AND NOT BIG POWERS THAT VIEWED THIS COUNTRY AS A +CLIENT STATE.+

AFTER ASEAN, MALAYSIA'S PRIORITY IN TERMS OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY AND RELATIONS WAS:

+THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC).

+THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED NATIONS AND A NUMBER OF ITS AGENCIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID A DETAILED STUDY OF MALAYSIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMONWEALTH WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF A MARKED DIFFERENCE IN THE TREATMENT OF THE WHITE AND NON-WHITE MEMBERS. --

MORE

1455MST 18 09 86

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U E049 AAE
MAHATHIR-FOREIGN 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE OBSERVED THAT STUDENTS FROM EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES WHO WERE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, FOR INSTANCE, WERE GETTING SPECIAL TREATMENT WHILE MALAYSIAN STUDENTS WERE SUBJECTED TO TUITION FEES THAT WERE SO HIGH +WE END UP INDIRECTLY HELPING THE ENGLISH AND OTHER STUDENTS.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT FROM ITS RELATIONS WITH OTHER NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, MALAYSIA WAS NOT LIKELY TO GET ANY ASSISTANCE FROM THEM.

HOWEVER, AS THE +THIRD FORCE+, THEY ACTED AS A BALANCE IN THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN BLOCS.

HE SAID MALAYSIA STILL WISHED TO HAVE COOPERATION WITH ISLAMIC NATIONS AND MUSLIMS WHEREVER THEY MIGHT BE ALTHOUGH IT WAS AWARE THAT:

+THERE WERE ISLAMIC NATIONS THAT LIKED TO CREATE TROUBLE IN OTHER ISLAMIC COUNTRIES. -- MORE

1501MST 18 09 86

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MAHATHIR-FOREIGN 4 KUALA LUMPUR

+THERE WERE ISLAMIC NATIONS THAT FREQUENTLY CLASHED WITH ONE ANOTHER AND PRACTISED A NATIONALISM THAT WAS SO EXTREME AS TO RELEGATE ISLAM TO SECOND PLACE.

+THERE WERE ISLAMIC NATIONS THAT HAD BECOME MARXIST OR CLIENT STATES OF THE UNITED STATES.

HE SAID MALAYSIA ONLY SUPPORTED THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS AGENCIES TO SERVE AS A FORUM WHEN IT NEEDED TO SPEAK TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

MALAYSIA WOULD ATTEND UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSIONS AND MEETINGS IN DEALING WITH THE DADAH MENACE AS THIS WAS A PROBLEM OF NOT JUST THIS COUNTRY BUT ALSO THE WHOLE WORLD.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE LOOK EAST POLICY WOULD BE CONTINUED BECAUSE THE CULTURES AND MORALITY OF EASTERN NATIONS WERE COMPATIBLE WITH THOSE OF MALAYSIA. -- BERNAMA

1616MST 18 09 86