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MAHATHIR-ANONYMITY

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 6 (BERNAMA) -- THERE IS A NEED FOR MALAYSIA TO FREE ITSELF FROM BEING AN +ANONYMOUS+ COUNTRY IF IT HOPES TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY AGAINST ITS MORE RENOWNED NEIGHBOURS, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

+THE MALAYSIAN PROBLEM IS HOW TO OVERCOME THIS ANONYMITY,+ HE SAID WHEN OPENING AN INVESTMENT SEMINAR PRIVATELY ORGANISED FOR AMERICAN POTENTIAL INVESTORS AT A LEADING HOTEL HERE.

HE NOTED THAT MALAYSIA WAS LESS KNOWN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD WHEN COMPARED TO ITS NEIGHBOURS SINGAPORE, INDONESIA, THAILAND, THE PHILIPPINES AND EVEN VIETNAM.

HE SAID MALAYSIA STILL CONJURED UP A BLANK IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA AND THAT PEOPLE STILL SAY, +MALAYSIA NOW WHERE ON EARTH IS THAT?+

IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE OF THIS ANONYMITY THAT US INVESTMENTS IN MALAYSIA'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR TOTALLED A MERE US\$121 MILLION IN TERMS OF PAID-UP CAPITAL AND US\$358 MILLION IN TERMS OF FIXED ASSETS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID. -- MORE
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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR FELT ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THIS LOW PROFILE COULD BE THAT MALAYSIA WAS A NEW COUNTRY THAT CAME INTO BEING +WITHOUT THE USUAL BIG BANG, SO QUIETLY THAT NOBODY NOTICED+.

+THERE WAS NO PROTRACTED WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION OR EAST-WEST PROXY FIGHT. CONSEQUENTLY WE CANNOT EVEN BE NOTORIOUS LIKE VIETNAM.

+NEWSPEOPLE DO NOT LIKE COUNTRIES THAT ARE CALM AND PEACEFUL AND ATTAINS ECONOMIC GROWTH AS A MATTER OF COURSE. POLITICALLY TOO THERE IS NOT MUCH TO REPORT ABOUT MALAYSIA,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID SINCE INDEPENDENCE MALAYA THEN AND MALAYSIA NOW HAS BEEN RULED BY THE SAME COALITION, ALLIANCE AND LATER BARISAN NASIONAL, WHICH WON A 4/5 MAJORITY IN THE GENERAL ELECTION ON AUG 3.

THIS SUCCESS HAD CONTRIBUTED FURTHER IN IRRITATING NEWSMEN LOOKING FOR NEWSWORTHY MEDIA EVENTS, HE SAID. -- MORE
1306MST 06 10 86

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THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT MALAYSIA DID NOT INTEND TO ATTRACT ATTENTION BY BEING UNSTABLE OR UNPREDICTABLE.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STABILITY AS THIS WAS THE QUALITY THAT WOULD ATTRACT INVESTORS, PARTICULARLY FOREIGNERS, TO FURTHER HELP DEVELOP THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS CONFIDENT POTENTIAL INVESTORS WOULD +FALL IN LOVE+ IMMEDIATELY WITH MALAYSIA AND ITS FRIENDLY PEOPLE ONCE THEY WERE HERE AND WOULD HELP TO SPREAD THE NAME OF THE COUNTRY AMONG THEIR BUSINESS FRIENDS AT HOME. -- BERNAMA
1318MST 06 10 86