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KUALA LUMPUR, AUG 15 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY MALAYSIA'S TOUGH STAND AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKERS IS BEGINNING TO BE ACCEPTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

WHERE PREVIOUSLY THERE HAD BEEN CRITICISMS OF THE STAND, THE WORLD WAS NOW BEGINNING TO AGREE WITH MALAYSIA THAT THE STERN MEASURES AND PUNISHMENT FOR DRUG TRAFFICKERS WERE APPROPRIATE, HE SAID.

+THE WORLD IS STARTING TO REALISE THAT OUR FIRM ACTION IS SOLELY TO ENSURE THAT SOCIETY IS SAFE FROM THE DANGERS OF DRUGS,+ HE SAID WHEN CLOSING THE NATIONAL-LEVEL FIRST AID COMPETITION ORGANISED BY THE FEDERAL TERRITORY BRANCH OF THE MALAYSIA RED CRESCENT SOCIETY (MRCS) HERE.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE DRUG MENACE WAS NOT ONLY A PROBLEM TO MALAYSIA BUT TO THE WHOLE WORLD.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR LATER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO THE MRCS FOR STEPPING FORWARD TO HELP MAKE A SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE FOLLOWING THE GOVERNMENT'S LAUNCHING OF THE ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN IN 1983. -- MORE

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+THE SOCIETY'S INVOLVEMENT BY SETTING UP A TASK FORCE SPECIALLY TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT AND PEMADAM IS APPRECIATED,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO MRCS PRESIDENT, SAID THE YOUTHS WHO JOINED THE SOCIETY COULD IMPROVE SELF-DISCIPLINE AND EQUIP THEMSELVES WITH SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IN CERTAIN FIELDS.