

D325

B E282 AAE

MAHATHIR-RINGGIT R'R'R'

BM

JOHOR BAHRU, JAN 22 (BERNAMA) -- ⁸⁸ ^P DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY THE LOWER VALUE OF THE MALAYSIAN RINGGIT AGAINST THE SINGAPORE DOLLAR DOES NOT POSE A PROBLEM FOR MALAYSIA.

HE SAID THE QUESTION WAS WHETHER OR NOT MALAYSIA COULD STILL EXPORT, AND A LOWER RINGGIT VALUE WOULD MEAN CHEAPER MALAYSIAN GOODS.

+WE MANUFACTURE GOODS THAT DO NOT COMPETE WITH SINGAPORE'S. WE ARE COMPETING WITH THAILAND AND INDONESIA, AND THE VALUE OF THE INDONESIAN RUPIAH, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS DECLINED SUBSTANTIALLY WHILE THE VALUE OF THE THAI BAHT HAS NOT CLIMBED MUCH,+ THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE HERE.

+IF WE TRY TO CATCH UP WITH SINGAPORE, OUR GOODS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPETE WITH GOODS PRODUCED BY INDONESIA AND THAILAND.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO REFERRED TO THE INTERNATIONAL COCOA ORGANISATION PROPOSAL TO LEVY ADDITIONAL DUTY ON COCOA EXPORTS FROM A NON-MEMBER TO A MEMBER COUNTRY, SAYING A POLICY DISCRIMINATING AGAINST ANOTHER COUNTRY WAS USUALLY NOT IN ACCORD WITH INTERNATIONAL TRADE PRACTICES. -- MORE

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B E291 AAE

MAHATHIR-RINGGIT 2 JOHOR BAHRU R'R'R'

+IF IT IS ON CONDITION THAT IT IS NOT DIRECTED AT A PARTICULAR COUNTRY, I FEEL THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT IT. IT IS PROBABLY JUST A PROPOSAL,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WELCOMED A UNITED STATES ASSURANCE OF SUPPORT FOR MALAYSIA'S BID FOR A SEAT IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

US ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS DR GASTON SIGUR HAD SAID IN KUALA LUMPUR THIS WEEK THE US WOULD BACK MALAYSIA'S CANDIDACY IF THE OTHER ASEAN NATIONS AGREED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HOPED SUPPORT FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

ON THE POSITION OF THREE NEWSPAPERS WHOSE PUBLISHING PERMITS WERE REVOKED LATE LAST YEAR WHEN A NATIONWIDE ISA SECURITY SWEEP WAS LAUNCHED TO DEFUSE RISING RACIAL TENSION IN THE COUNTRY, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT MADE ANY DECISION YET.

+WHEN WE FEEL WE SHOULD APPROVE (RE-ISSUANCE OF THE PERMITS), WE WILL APPROVE ... IN LINE WITH THE FACTS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION. BUT WE DO NOT HAVE THE FACTS AT PRESENT,+ HE SAID.

ON THE JOHOR GOVERNMENT-ORGANISED LOW-COST HOUSING DESIGN CONTEST, HE PRAISED THE MOVE AND HOPED THE OTHER STATES WOULD ADOPT THE WINNING DESIGNS AS WELL AS THE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES. --

BERNAMA

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