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R E158 AAE
MAHATHIR-DENMARK

88 P
KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 17 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA HOPES TO FULLY TAP THE GROWING POTENTIAL OF THE DANISH MARKET AND DEVELOP DENMARK INTO A MAJOR DISTRIBUTION CENTRE FOR MALAYSIA'S EXPORT TO THE NORDIC COUNTRIES, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT.

HE BELIEVED COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TOWARDS REALISING THESE OBJECTIVES WOULD BE A POSITIVE STEP IN INCREASING THE OVERALL TRADE BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES.

SPEAKING AT A DINNER IN HONOUR OF VISITING DENMARK PRIME MINISTER ENCIK POUL SCHLUTER AT SRI PERDANA HERE, HE EXPRESSED HIS READINESS TO WELCOME ANY VIEWS FROM ENCIK SCHLUTER ON BILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES THAT WOULD HELP GENERATE GREATER COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

HE SAID THE VISIT WAS A GOOD OCCASION TO REVIEW THE STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSES THE PROGRESS MADE SO FAR IN STRENGTHENING BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, COMMODITIES HAD RECORDED LOW PRICES WHICH BROUGHT TO THE DECLINE IN VALUE TERM MALAYSIA'S EXPORTS TO DENMARK, ALTHOUGH IN QUANTITATIVE TERM THE DANISH MARKET CONTINUED TO REGISTER INCREASING OFF-TAKES FROM MALAYSIA. -- MORE

2323MST 17 03 88

R E159 AAE
MAHATHIR-DENMARK 2 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID MALAYSIA HOPED TO OVERCOME THE PERSISTENT TRADE DEFICIT FACED SO AS TO ESTABLISH A MORE BALANCED TRADE RELATIONS WITH DENMARK.

ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA HAD OFFERED VARIOUS INCENTIVES, THE GROWTH OF DANISH INVESTMENTS IN THIS COUNTRY HAD NOT REFLECTED DENMARK'S REAL POTENTIAL, HE ADDED.

HE HOPED AN ATTITUDINAL CHANGE COULD BE EFFECTED BY LEADERS OF THE DANISH INDUSTRY SO THAT THE QUANTUM OF DANISH PARTICIPATION AND INVESTMENT IN MALAYSIA COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED.

HE ALSO MENTIONED DENMARK'S POSITIVE ATTITUDE DISPLAYED IN VARIOUS AREAS OF SPECIAL INTERESTS, INCLUDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CREDIT LINE FACILITIES THAT HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED AND BENEFICIAL TO THE COUNTRY.

HE SAID DENMARK'S STEADFAST OPPOSITION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S PROPOSED LEVY ON VEGETABLE AND MARINE OILS AND FATS WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY MALAYSIA, A MAJOR PRODUCER OF PALM OIL.

MALAYSIA ALSO RECOGNISED DENMARK'S POSITIVE ROLE IN ABSORBING SOME OF THE REFUGEES GIVEN FIRST ASYLUM BY MALAYSIA, HE SAID. -- MORE
2326MST 17 03 88

R E160 AAE
MAHATHIR-DENMARK 3 KUALA LUMPUR

+DENMARK AND MALAYSIA ALSO HAVE A COMMONALITY OF VIEWS IN OVER A WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO BOTH COUNTRIES PARTICULARLY ON THE STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS,+ HE ADDED.

+WE HAVE A COMMON NEED TO EXERCISE OUR INFLUENCE, HOWEVER LIMITED, IN SHAPING THE COURSE OF EVENTS TOWARDS SECURING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.+

HE ASKED WHETHER THE BIG POWERS WERE REALLY SINCERE WHEN THEY DECIDED TO REMOVE AND DISMANTLE THEIR INTERMEDIATE MISSILES OR THEY WERE MERELY DISCARDING OUT OF DATE WEAPONRY IN FAVOUR OF MORE LETHAL STATE OF THE ART WEAPONS.

+WHILST THE SUPERPOWERS GRAPPLED WITH THEIR STRATEGIC EQUATIONS, SEEMINGLY IN THE INTEREST OF PEACE ON EARTH, THEY SEEM TO BE INVOLVED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IN A NUMBER OF LOCAL CONFLICTS+, THE PRIME MINISTER ADDED.

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, ALTHOUGH THE VIETNAM WAR HAD ENDED AND SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT PEACE IN THIS REGION, UNFORTUNATELY VIETNAM DECIDED TO INVAD E KAMPUCHEA, HE SAID, ADDING THAT ASEAN LEADERS WERE STILL SEARCHING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THIS UNNECESSARY AND UNFORTUNATE STATE OF AFFAIRS. -- BERNAMA

2332MST 17 03 88