

R 0349 AAE

MAHATHIR-ERA

(EMBARGO) FOR RELEASE AT 9.30 P.M. TODAY DEC. 14)

SINGAPORE, DEC. 14 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH MUST PRESENT A UNITED FRONT TO RESPOND TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES EMERGING IN THE PRESENT ERA OF TRANSITION WHICH WILL SEE NEW THREATS FROM THE NORTH. NEVERTHELESS, HE ENVISAGED THAT THE NEXT FEW YEARS BEFORE THE END OF THE CENTURY TO HAVE MORE PEACE IN WHICH TO BUILD A NEW WORLD -- ONE MORE TRULY INTER-DEPENDENT WHERE DECISION-MAKING ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD'S ECONOMY WOULD NOT BE CONFINED TO A FEW MAJOR POWERS.

DECISIONS MUST INVOLVE GREATER PARTICIPATION -- A DEMOCRATISATION OF NATIONS RATHER THAN JUST PEOPLE, HE SAID.

HE ADDED: +I SEE A NEED FOR STRENGTHENING THE UN SYSTEM IN ITS ROLE IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS, IN SECURING PEACE AND THE MITIGATION OF SUCH GLOBAL PROBLEMS AS DRUGS, TERRORISM, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND REFUGEES.

+800 MILLIONS, WE WILL HAVE A MORE COMPREHENSIVE WORLD ABLE TO ACT POSITIVELY TO MEET THE PROBLEMS POSED BY THE LATEST AGE OF TRANSITION.+

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WAS SPEAKING ON +REGIONALISM, GLOBALISM AND SPHERES OF INFLUENCE+ ASEAN AND THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY+ AT THE SINGAPORE LECTURE, ORGANISED BY THE INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES.

SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER, ENCIK LEE KUAN YEN AND WIFE AND CABINET MINISTERS WERE AMONG THE 1,000 PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED THE TALK. -- MORE

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REFLECTING ON THE FUTURE AND CHALLENGES OF CHANGE THAT COULD BE EXPECTED IN THE NEXT 132 MONTHS, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HUMANITY HAD REACHED A HISTORICAL TURNING POINT RICH WITH POLITICAL POSSIBILITIES BUT REPLETE ALSO WITH SERIOUS ECONOMIC THREATS.

SECONDLY, IN A SHRINKING WORLD NO ONE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO ESCAPE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CHANGES THE WORLD WAS GOING THROUGH -- A SECOND TRANSITION SINCE THE DISMANTLING OF ALL EMPIRES AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

+IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY FOR US TO FULLY GRASP THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF CONTINUITY AND TRANSITION AND TO RESPOND QUICKLY, FLEXIBLY, WITH CREATIVITY AND STRENGTH, TO THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL PRESENT THEMSELVES AS WELL AS THE CHALLENGES THAT WILL BE HURLED AT US,+ HE ADDED.

THIS CALLED FOR NATIONAL RESILIENCE AT HOME AND A UNITED FRONT AMONG REGIONAL GROUPINGS TO DETERMINE THE FORTUNES IN THE CHALLENGING YEARS AHEAD AS THE MAJOR POWERS WHICH HE DUBBED +THE FIVE KINGDOMS+ TURN TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENTALISM.

HE SAID PRAGMATISM'S ASSAULT ON ARCHAIC IDEOLOGIES HAD RESULTED IN WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED +THE MODERNISATIONS IN THE FIVE KINGDOMS+, STARTING WITH CHINA'S FOUR MODERNISATIONS.

THEN CAME GLASNOST AND PERESTROIKA IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE +SECOND OPENING+ OF JAPAN, NOW FOLLOWED BY THE CREATION OF A SINGLE MARKET BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) BY 1992.

THE PROCESS OF THE MODERNISATION OF THE FIVE KINGDOMS WILL BE COMPLETE WHEN THE UNITED STATES LAUNCHES ITS OWN PROGRAMME OF INTERNAL REFORM AND RECONSTRUCTION, HE ADDED. -- MORE

2213HST 14 12 88

R 8331 AAE
MAHATHIR-ERA 3 SINGAPORE (EMBARGO)

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE DESIRE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST IMPERIAL PERIOD COULD LEAD TO YET ANOTHER RAPE OF THE POOR BECAUSE THE TRUCE AMONG THE FIVE KINGDOMS WAS FRAUGHT WITH DANGER FOR THE UNSUSPECTING POOR COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

HE ADDED: + THE ARRAY OF WEAPONS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE FIVE KINGDOMS ARE AS NUMEROUS AND AS VARIED AS THEIR MILITARY WEAPONRY, AND THEY ARE JUST AS EFFECTIVE.

+AID, LOANS, MARKETS, SECS, CURRENCIES, LABOUR UNIONS, MEDIA, TRANSNATIONAL PRESSURE GROUPS, NON-TARIFF BARRIERS, TARIFFS, TECHNOLOGY, INVESTMENT FUNDS AND KNOWHOW, GLOBAL CORPORATIONS AND A HOST OF OTHER INSTITUTIONS CAN BE MANIPULATED TO ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIVE IS ACHIEVED, IF NEED BE, AT THE EXPENSE OF THE POOR.+

BUT, THE POOR CAN TAKE HEART, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE FIVE KINGDOMS MIGHT HAVE TO COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER SO FIERCELY THAT THERE MIGHT BE ROOM OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE POOR TO REAP SOME BENEFIT IN BETWEEN.

+HOWEVER, MUCH DEPENDS ON THE SOUTH'S READING OF THE SITUATION AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACT,+ HE ADDED.

POOR AS THEY MIGHT BE, THE COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH TOGETHER STILL CONSTITUTED A HUGE MARKET AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THEY AT LEAST PRESENT A UNITED FRONT BECAUSE ALONE THEY WOULD BE TOO SMALL TO INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDE OF THE RICH. -- MORE

2219HST 14 12 88

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R 8332 AAE
MAHATHIR-ERA 4 SINGAPORE (EMBARGO)

HOLDING UP ASEAN AS A GROUPING THAT SHOULD PROVE CONVENIENT FOR COUNTERING PRESSURES FROM THE NORTH, DATUK SERI MAHATHIR SAID CLOSER REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITHIN THE SIX-MEMBER ASSOCIATION WAS NOW IMPERATIVE.

ALREADY, THE GROUP OF SEVEN HAD TAKEN IT UPON THEMSELVES TO SHAPE THE WORLD'S ECONOMY AND A UNIFIED EUROPEAN ECONOMY WITH AN ECONOMIC UNION OF THE US AND CANADA WOULD BE EVEN MORE POWERFUL, HE ADDED.

HE STRESSED THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES MUST ACCEPT THAT EVEN IF EACH CAN MANUFACTURE ALL THEIR DOMESTIC NEEDS, IT WAS ECONOMICALLY CHEAPER AND MORE PROFITABLE TO CATER TO THE WHOLE ASEAN MARKET.

HE SAID THAT A LINK-UP OF ALL THE REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS WOULD MAKE THE SOUTH MORE CAPABLE OF PLAYING A ROLE IN THE WORLD'S ECONOMY AND EVEN IN THE INEVITABLE ECONOMIC WRANGLES BETWEEN EMERGENT KINGDOMS OF THE NORTH.

WITH THE WILL AND RESOLVE TO CORRECT UNFAIR AND INEVITABLE DISTRIBUTION, THE SOUTH WOULD BE ABLE TO PUSH THE NORTH TO SELL THEIR GOODS AND SERVICES AT MORE REASONABLE PRICES, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID: +I AM NOT SUGGESTING A TRADE WAR BETWEEN THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH AS A SOLUTION TO THE NEW THREATS CONSEQUENT UPON THE SWING TO THE RIGHT IN THE FIVE KINGDOMS.

+SUCH A WAR CANNOT BE WON BY THE SOUTH, BUT THE FACT IS THAT THE FORTRESS MENTALITY IN EUROPE AND AMERICA AND THE DESIRE BY THE SOVIETS AND CHINA TO GO FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AS WELL AS JAPAN'S ALREADY OVERWHELMING ECONOMIC POWER REQUIRES SOME ADJUSTMENTS BY THE REGIONAL GROUPINGS OF THE SOUTH.

+CONFRONTATION IS NOT NECESSARY. EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO CO-EXIST AND TO BENEFIT FROM THE NEW TURN OF EVENTS IN THE NORTH.

+THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT CAN BE DONE, BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL IS FOR MEMBER COUNTRIES TO GET CLOSER TOGETHER AND FOR THE REGIONAL GROUPINGS OF THE SOUTH TO DO THE SAME.+ -- BERNAMA

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