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MAHATHIR

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MELAKA, DEC 15 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY RELATIONS BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA HAVE A VITAL INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION.

IF THE RELATIONS WERE GOOD, THEN THE SITUATION IN THE REGION WOULD ALSO BE GOOD, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

HE SAID ASEAN'S SUCCESS OR FAILURE ALSO DEPENDED HEAVILY ON THE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA, ADDING THAT IF THE RELATIONS WERE BAD, ASEAN'S POSITION WOULD BE AFFECTED.

→ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE SOLID, ASEAN'S POSITION WILL BECOME STRONGER AND MORE EFFECTIVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT, → DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID WHEN OPENING THE THREE-DAY →DIALOGUE MALINDO I→ AT THE TANJONG BIDARA BEACH RESORT NEAR HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIAN-INDONESIAN RELATIONS WAS UNIQUE IN NATURE BECAUSE IT HAD FAR REACHING EFFECTS ON NOT JUST THE FUTURE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES BUT ALSO ASEAN.

IN THIS CONNECTION, NO ONE SHOULD HARBOUR SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE CLOSENESS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AS THIS HAD BENEFITTED SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A WHOLE. -- MORE
1517HST 16 12 88

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MAHATHIR 2 MELAKA

HE SAID THE AFFINITY BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA COULD BE COMPARED WITH THE TIES BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES WHICH HAD AN IMPACT ON THE WORLD SITUATION.

→IF THE TWO COUNTRIES CAN HELP EACH OTHER, THIS WILL FURTHER STRENGTHEN AND GIVE MORE MEANING TO THE ASEAN GROUPING, → HE ADDED.

→EVEN THOUGH THE LEFT AND RIGHT BLOCs HAVE REDUCED TENSION BETWEEN THEM WITH THE POSSIBLE AIM OF CONCENTRATING ON DEVELOPMENT, HE MAY STILL BECOME THEIR VICTIMS UNLESS THERE IS CLOSE COOPERATION WITHIN ASEAN TO WITHSTAND THIS POSSIBILITY.

→THE CLOSE BOND BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA SHOULD BE PRESERVED WHEN THE SECOND ECHELON LEADERS TAKE OVER, → HE SAID, ADDING THAT THE CLOSENESS COULD FACILITATE THE RESOLVING OF PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THROUGH JUST LIFTING THE TELEPHONE.

HE SAID CERTAIN QUARTERS FEARED ASEAN'S POSITION WOULD BE AFFECTED WHEN THE CURRENT LEADERS WERE SUCCEEDED BY THE SECOND ECHELON, ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE THE YOUNGER LEADERS DID NOT KNOW EACH OTHER WELL.

→THIS DIALOGUE WILL HELP CEMENT FURTHER THE CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BECAUSE IT WILL HELP STEP UP UNDERSTANDING AND INFORMATION BETWEEN THEIR SECOND ECHELON LEADERS, → DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID. HE ARRIVED HERE FROM SINGAPORE WHERE HE ENDED A THREE-DAY VISIT TODAY. -- MORE
1531HST 16 12 88

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MAHATHIR 3 MELAKA

INDONESIA'S YOUTH AND SPORTS MINISTER AKHBAR TANJUNG, IN HIS SPEECH AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INDOONESIAN GOVERNMENT, SAID THE DIALOGUE WOULD ENHANCE COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

FORTY INDOONESIAN YOUTH LEADERS AND UMNO YOUTH AND WANITA LEADERS ARE ATTENDING THE DIALOGUE, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE FUNCTION WERE MELAKA CHIEF MINISTER DATUK SERI ABDUL RAHIM THAMBY CHIK AND INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT.

AFTER OPENING THE DIALOGUE, THE PRIME MINISTER PERFORMED FRIDAY PRAYERS AT MASJID AL-SYUHADA' AT KEM TERENOK. HE IS SCHEDULED TO HAVE A CLOSED-DOOR DIALOGUE WITH THE PARTICIPANTS THIS AFTERNOON. --
BERNAMA

1532HST 16 12 88