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MAHATHIR-CHOGM

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 26⁸⁹ ((BERNAMA)) -- MALAYSIA HOPES THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING HERE NEXT MONTH WILL. GIVE ATTENTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND TAKE A COMMON STAND ON THE MATTER, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ARE DRAWING WORLD ATTENTION AND THE COMMONWEALTH SHOULD COHE OUT WITH A STAND ON THE ISSUE BY TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ALL FACTORS, INCLUDING THE INTEREST OF THE SMALL COUNTRIES WHICH RELY ON NATURAL RESOURCES AS A SOURCE OF REVENUE.

+THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BE SHOULDERED BY BOTH THE RICH AND POOR COUNTRIES, BUT THE RICH SHOULD BEAR A HEAVIER LOAD,+ HE TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER CHAIRING A CHOGM ADVISORY PANEL MEETING AT THE PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE HERE.

+FOR INSTANCE, WE HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEPLETION OF THE OZONE LAYER ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE WE ARE CUTTING DOWN THE TREES BUT IN THE RICH COUNTRIES, THOSE WITH MONEY DO NOT MAKE ANY EFFORT TO PLANT TREES.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONSUME MORE OIL AND CHLOROFUOROCARBONS (CFCS), WIDELY USED IN AEROSOLS AND REFRIGERATORS, THAN THE OTHERS BUT THERE IS NO EFFORT TO *RECTIFY+ THEIR INDUSTRIES TO REDUCE POLLUTION. -- MORE

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+THESE COUNTRIES ARE HIGHLIGHTING DEFORESTATION BUT MALAYSIA IS NOT JUST CARRYING OUT LOGGING BUT ALSO REPLANTING TREES,+ HE SAID.

+HOWEVER, IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THE FORESTS ARE NOW MORE BARREN FIELDS.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO SAID MALAYSIA WILL STRESS AT CHOGM THE NEED FOR GLOBAL PEACE, TRADE LIBERALISM! REDUCED TRADE PROTECTIONISM, MORE OPEN MARKETS AND A BETTER DEAL FOR THE POORER COUNTRIES.

IT WILL ALSO SPEAK ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID PROBLEM AND THE COMMONWEALTH'S ROLE IN FIGHTING DADAH ABUSE.

HE HOPED COMMONWEALTH MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL COHE OUT WITH GUIDELINES FOR JOINT ACTION TO TACKLE THESE MATTERS.

ON CLAIMS THAT SOME COUNTRIES ARE PLAYING A DOMINEERING ROLE IN THE COMMONWEALTH, HE SAID THIS IS ONLY AN IMPRESSION.

HE STRESSED THAT EVERY COUNTRY IN THE COMMONWEALTH HAS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN VOICING ITS VIEWS. -- MORE

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HE SAID THIS IMPRESSION WAS CREATED BECAUSE THE MEDIA ARE MORE INTERESTED IN PROJECTING THE SPEECHES AND VIEWS OF ONLY THE POPULAR LEADERS EVEN THOUGH THE ISSUES THEY VOICE HAVE BEEN RAISED PREVIOUSLY BY LEADERS OF THE SMALLER COUNTRIES.

FOR INSTANCE, HE SAID, THE ANTARCTICA PROBLEM WAS FIRST RAISED BY MALAYSIA BUT IT DID NOT RECEIVE WORLD ATTENTION BECAUSE ITS VIEWS WERE NOT HIGHLIGHTED BY THE MEDIA.

HE FELT THAT THE HOPE TO UNIFY THE EUROPEAN MARKETS IN 1992 WILL BE RAISED BY COMMONWEALTH LEADERS, ESPECIALLY BRITAIN'S ROLE IN PROTECTING COMMONWEALTH MEMBER COUNTRIES.

MALAYSIA, HE SAID, WILL GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO TRADE ISSUES EVEN THOUGH CHOGRMS NORHALLY GIVE MORE PRIORITY TO THE APARTHEID PROBLEM IN SOUTH AFRICA.

DATUK SERIDRMAHATHIR SAID SINCE THE LAST CHOGH IN VANCOUVER, CANADA, THE WHITE REGIME IN SOUTH AFRICA IS MORE CONSCIOUS OF ITS ACTIONS AGAINST THE BLACKS AND ITS POLICY IN NAMIBIA.-- MORE
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THIS IS BECAUSE IT IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE EFFECTS OF THE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST IT, HE SAID.

ON HIS OPINION NOW ON THE COMMONWEALTH, HE SAID: +I WILL RESERVE MY VIEWS FOR THE OPENING OF THE MEETING. OTHERWISE, IT WILL NOT BE INTERESTING.+

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID CHOGM IS ALSO EXPECTED TO TOUCH ON THE KAMPUCHEA PROBLEM IN A GENERAL CONTEXT.

ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ALL IS GOING ON SCHEDULE AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE MEETING AND THE STATE VISIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH TO MALAYSIA WILL BE A SUCCESS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT IS SPENDING ABOUT \$50 MILLION FOR THE MEETING AND THE VISIT.

THE TWO-HOUR MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY, AMONG OTHERS, INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT, MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT DATUK DR YUSOF NOR, WORKS MINISTER DATUK LEO MOGGIE, KUALA LUMPUR DATUK BANDAR DATUK ELYAS OMAR AND CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT TAN SRI SALLEHUDDIN MOHAMED.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE ADVISORY PANEL MEETING, THE LAST TO BE HELD BEFORE CHOGM, WAS THE PRIME MINISTER'S WIFE, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH MOHAMED ALI. -- BERNAMA

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