

KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 16 (BERNAMA) -- THE COMMONWEALTH SUMMIT BEGINNING

HERE WEDNESDAY WILL TRY TO ENSURE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE NOT + PRESSED

TOO MUCH+ IN THE GLOBAL ATTEMPT AT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE AMONG THE NUMEROUS ISSUES ON THE AGENDA OF THE WEEK-LONG COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (CHOGM) WHICH DATUK SERI

DR MAHATHIR WILL CHAIR.

HE SAID THE ENVIRONMENT PROBLEM AFFECTED ALL COUNTRIES, INCLUDING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT BE CALLED UPON TO BEAR THE +BURDEN+ OF

KEEPING THE ENVIRONMENT LIVABLE.

+WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT IN THE ATTEMPT TO RECREATE THE ENVIRONMENT

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE NOT PRESSED TOO MUCH+ HE TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AT

THE PUTRA WORLD TRADE CENTRE -- THE CHOGM VENUE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD ANNOUNCED RECENTLY THAT MALAYSIA WOULD BE

DRAFTING A +LANGKAWI DECLARATION+ ON THE ENVIRONMENT TO BE ENDORSED AT THE MEETING. LANGKAWI ISLAND OFF KEDAH WILL BE THE TRADITIONAL RETREAT FOR THE

HEADS OF DELEGATIONS. -- MORE

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THE DECLARATION WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT WESTERN VALUES ARE NOT IMPOSED

ON THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES. THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT HAS ALSO PREPARED ITS

DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT WHICH CONSIDERS VIEWS FROM SOME MEMBER COUNTRIES.

REPLYING A QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR BLAMED THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OF HAVING POLLUTED THE ENVIRONMENT. +BUT, IT IS THE DEVELOPING

COUNTRIES NOW THAT ARE BEING TOLD TO STOP CUTTING DOWN TREES, STOP GROWING

RUBBER TREES AND OIL PALMS.+

+I DON'T THINK THAT IS VERY FAIR, TO ME. WE NEED TO DEVELOP OUR COUNTRY

TO GIVE OUR PEOPLE A BETTER LIFE,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE ADMITTED THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM WAS NOT JUST THE CONCERN OF

DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. +DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE ALSO BOUND TO SUFFER JUST AS

MUCH AS THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IF WE DON'T LOOK AFTER THE ENVIRONMENT NOW,+

HE SAID.

HOWEVER, THE EMPHASIS NOW, HE SAID, SEEMED TO BE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MUST CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ENSURING THAT THE ECOSYSTEM IS NOT DISTURBED,

+IF WE ARE TO BE TRUTHFUL! IT IS THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE

POLLUTED THE ENVIRONMENT SUCH AS THROUGH THE EMISSION OF NOXIOUS GASES,+ HE

SAID. -- MORE

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO QUESTIONED ACTIONS IN THE WEST SUCH AS TAP
PIN6
UNDERGROUND WATER IN THE CALIFORNIAN DESERTS MERELY TO CONSTRUCT GOLF
COURSES AND LAKES FOR LUXURY HOTELS WHEN THE WATER COULD INSTEAD BE U
SED TO
REAFFOREST THE DESERTS.

HE SAID THAT THERE WAS ALSO NO NEED FOR FORESTS IN TEMPERATE COUNT
RIES
TO BE CLEARED FOR PLANTING RAPESEED AND SUNFLOWER SEEDS BECAUSE MALAY
SIA AND
HER NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES PRODUCED ENOUGH VEGETABLE OILS FOR THE WHO
LE
WORLD.

TO ANOTHER QUESTION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA HAD ALWA
YS
BEEN AGAINST THE EXPLOITATION OF THE ANTARTICA FOR OIL AND MINERAL
RESOURCES, AND HAD CALLED FOR THE CONTINENT TO BE DECLARED A +GLOBAL
COMMON+
AND NOT RESERVED FOR A FEW CLAIMANT COUNTRIES.

HE SAID SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH THERE WAS ALLOWABLE BUT WARNED THAT VE
RY
LITTLE WAS KNOWN OF WHAT EXPLOITATION MIGHT CAUSE.

MALAYSIA, HE SAID, WAS PLEASED THAT AUSTRALIA AND FRANCE, WHICH AR
E
MEMBERS OF THE ANTARTICA TREATY, HAD PROPOSED RECENTLY THAT THE ICE-C
LAD

CONTINENT BE DECLARED A WORLD PARK,
FRENCH UNDERSEA EXPLORER! JACQUES COUSTEAU1 'HAD ALSO CALLED FOR TH
E
ANTARCTICA TO BE DECLARED A NATURE RESERVE, WARNING THAT THE EARTH'S
CLIMATE
DEPENDENT UPON IT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ENCIK COUSTEAU': EFFORTS HAD BEEN MORE
SUCCESSFUL THAN MALAYSIA'S IN PERSUADING THE TREATY COUNTRIES, BUT AD
DED

THAT +WE DON'T CARE WHO HAS BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL AS LONG AS PEOPLE DO
NOT

TRY TO EXPLOIT THE ANTARCTICA.+ -- BERNAMA

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