

R E020 AAE BMX

MAHATHIR - AIPO
(EMBARGO: FOR USE AFTER 1600 HRS TODAY)

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KUALA LUMPUR, AUG 22 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR GREATER EFFORTS TO IMPROVE INTRA-ASEAN TRADE AND INVESTMENTS TO PROVIDE THE IMPETUS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH.

ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES HAVE COMPETING ECONOMIES, THERE WAS AN URGENT NEED FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC MATTERS! HE SAID IN HIS MESSAGE TO THE 10TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANISATION (AIPO) WHICH OPENED IN MANILA TODAY.

HE SAID THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ALSO HAD COMPETING ECONOMIES BUT THEY WERE COALESCING TO STRENGTHEN THEIR ECONOMIC BASTION.

+WE MUST AT LEAST COOPERATE TO PROTECT OURSELVES,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR SHOULD BE GIVEN ALL ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TOWARDS REGIONAL PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID ASEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN ASEAN'S EFFORTS IN SEEKING MORE EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR GREATER TRADE LIBERALISATION, ACCESS TO MARKETS, SUITABLE AND FAIR COMMODITY PRICES, GREATER FLOW OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND FOR THE EASING OF THE BURDEN OF THE DEBT-RIDDEN COUNTRIES. -- MORE

1339MST 22 08 89

R E021 AAE BMX

MAHATHIR - AIPO 2 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGOED)

HE SAID ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THE WORLD'S POLITICAL STAGE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BRING ABOUT CHANGES IN THE ATTITUDES OF THE RICH AND INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES TO THE NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FOR A JUST AND EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL ORDER.

+IF ANYTHING, THE MOVES TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF ECONOMIC BLOCS AND REGIONAL MARKETS WILL WIDEN THE GULF BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,+ HE SAID.

ON REGIONAL SECURITY! DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MUTUAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE WERE ESSENTIAL IF ASEAN WERE TO ENGAGE IN COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT THE REGION DOES NOT AGAIN BECOME AN ARENA FOR BIG POWER RIVALRY AND THAT ASEAN ITSELF DOES NOT USE WAR OR THE THREAT OF THE USE OF FORCE TO SETTLE ITS DIFFERENCES.

+THE WAY FORWARD HAS ALREADY BEEN CHARTED BY ASEAN WITH ITS OBJECTIVE OF MAKING THE REGION A ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY (ZOPFAN),+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT AN EARLY REALISATION OF THIS OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE ACCORDED HIGH PRIORITY AS ASEAN LAUNCHES INTO A NEW ERA OF PEACEFUL COOPERATION AND RECONSTRUCTION IN THE REGION. -- MORE

1413MST 22 08 89

R E023 AAE BMX

MAHATHIR - AIPO 3 KUALA LUMPUR (EMBARGOED)

ON THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES **PROBLEM**, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID **ASEAN** COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO MAKE ALL THE SACRIFICES INDEFINITELY AS **FIRST** ASYLUM COUNTRIES FOR **REFUGEES**, AS THE PROBLEM DOES HAVE **DOMESTIC** AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE **ASEAN** COUNTRIES.

ASEAN, HE STRESSED, WAS ABIDING BY THE DECISIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES HELD IN GENEVA LAST JUNE ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE REFUGEE CAMP POPULATION WOULD BE DIMINISHED AND NO RESIDUE PROBLEM WOULD BURDEN **ASEAN** COUNTRIES.

DEWAN RAKYAT SPEAKER TAN SRI MOHAMAD ZAHIR **ISMAIL**, LEADER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION TO THE MEETING, DESCRIBED VIETNAM'S ACT OF DUMPING ITS OWN PEOPLE WHOM IT REJECTED ON THE LAPS OF ITS NEIGHBOURS AS MOST INCONSIDERATE.

+ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT IF THE VIETNAMESE CAN SEND AN ARMY INTO KAMPUCHEA9 THEY CAN ALSO PREVENT THEIR PEOPLE-FROM GETTING OUT OF THE **COUNTRY**, IF THEY HAVE A MIND TO DO **SO**,+ HE SAID.

HE **SAID** THE REFUGEE PROBLEM STILL PLAGUED SOME OF THE **ASEAN** COUNTRIES AND THE NUMBER OF ARRIVALS DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE ABATED.

-- BERNAMA

1418MST 22 08 a9