

D454

U E287 AAE

MAHATHIR-SUMMIT (RPTN: CORRECTING SPELLING OF NAME IN THIRD PARA)

BY KUAH GUAN OO

KUALA LUMPUR, FEB 19 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CALLED FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION BY ASIAN COUNTRIES TO PRESS FOR INVESTMENTS AND CAPITAL FROM WESTERN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES WHICH WERENOW FOCUSING ALL THEIR ATTENTION ON EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION.

+IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES IN EASTERN EUROPE AND IF THEY WERE TO ONLY FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION THERE, THEY CAN'T DIRECT THEIR ATTENTION HERE,+ HE SAID IN A FIVE-NATION +SATELLITE SUMMIT+ OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS.

THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS WERE PRESIDENT CORY AQUINO OF THE PHILIPPINES, PRIME MINISTER BENAZIR BHUTTO OF PAKISTAN, PRIME MINISTER KANG YOUNG HOON WHO REPRESENTED PRESIDENT ROH TAE WOO OF SOUTH KOREA AND FOREIGN MINISTER INDER GUJRAL WHO REPRESENTED PRIME MINISTER V.P. SINGH OF INDIA.

THE SUMMIT, TELECAST LIVE, WAS THE FIRST ORGANISED BY THE PRESS FOUNDATION OF ASIA WHICH IS HOLDING ITS 4TH ONE ASIA ASSEMBLY IN MANILA.

DR MAHATHIR, WHO SPOKE FROM ANGKASAPURI, LATER TOLD MALAYSIAN NEWSMEN THAT THERE WOULD BE COMPETITION FROM EASTERN EUROPE FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN INVESTMENTS. -- MORE  
1632MST 19 02 90

U E273 AAE

MAHATHIR-SUMMIT 2 KUALA LUMPUR (RPTN)

HE CITED THE ASEAN-EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MINISTERIAL MEETING (AEMM) IN KUCHING LAST WEEK AS AN EXAMPLE WHERE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WERE NOT PAYING ATTENTION TO THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

+MANY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE POWERFUL (EUROPEAN) NATIONS DID NOT ATTEND THE MEETING, SHOWING THAT THEY WERE PRE-OCCUPIED WITH EASTERN EUROPE,+ HE SAID.

DR MAHATHIR, WHOSE ANSWERS DREW APPLAUSE FROM THE AUDIENCE IN MANILA, SAID HE SAW THE WESTERN WORLD'S FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AS A THREAT TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA, RATHER THAN EASTERN EUROPE BEING AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

+GIVEN THEIR (WESTERN WORLD) NEARER CONTACTS AND KNOWLEDGE OF EASTERN EUROPE, THEY WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION... WHEREAS WE ARE FAR AWAY AND NOT THAT KNOWLEDGEABLE (TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES),+ HE ADDED.

+WITH THEIR PRE-OCCUPATION (WITH EASTERN EUROPE), THEY WOULD RELEGATE TO THE BACKGROUND THEIR RELATIONS WITH OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,+ HE SAID.

THE MANILA AUDIENCE APPLAUDED WHEN DR MAHATHIR CHALLENGED A MEMBER OF THE PANEL OF PROMINENT JOURNALISTS FROM ASIA WHO ASKED ABOUT THE DANGERS OF MIXING RELIGION WITH CIVIL GOVERNMENT. -- MORE  
1556MST 19 02 90

U E275 AAE  
MAHATHIR-SUMMIT 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID, IN MALAYSIA, MOST PEOPLE ARE RELIGIOUS AND THEIR VIEWS ARE BOUND TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON NATIONAL POLICIES.

HE ADDED THAT THE QUESTION SHOULD BE HOW TO DEAL WITH THE VIEWS OF THE EXTREMISTS. +IN ANY CASE, WHETHER ONE LISTENS OR NOT, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO CONFLICT IF RELIGION IS SEPARATED FROM THE SECULAR GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE PERCEPTION OF SEPARATION OF STATE AND RELIGION IS A WESTERN IDEAL BUT HE CHOSE THE EASTERN INTERPRETATION OF IT.

+IF WE ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE WEST, IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE ARE WRONG. WE SHOULD NOT BE TOTALLY DOMINATED BY WESTERN THINKING AND IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE ARE ALWAYS WRONG,+ HE ADDED.

MODERATOR BERNARD KALB, AN OLD ASIA HAND, THEN TURNED THE QUESTION OVER TO PUAN AQUINO AND ENCIK GUJVAL AND ASKED THEM HOW THEY SEE IT IN TERMS OF AN +INDEPENDENT ASIA+.

PUAN AQUINO SAID THEY WOULD NATURALLY LIKE TO BE INDEPENDENT OF THE WEST BUT SHE NOTED THAT ASIAN COUNTRIES TENDED TO COMPETE AMONG THEMSELVES, EVEN WITHIN ASEAN ITSELF.

+I GUESS WE NEED TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE AND THE NEED TO COOPERATE,+ SHE ADDED. -- MORE

1601MST 19 02 90

D443

U E277 AAE  
MAHATHIR-SUMMIT 4 KUALA LUMPUR

ENCIK GUJVAL SAID INDIA IS KEEN TO COOPERATE AND BE FRIENDLY ALTHOUGH IT HAS ITS OWN WAY OF THINKING. +WE ARE KEEN TO CATCH, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,+ HE ADDED.

ON LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM THE 80S AS ASIA ENTERED THE 90S, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE 80S SHOWED THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA CAN EMULATE JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN, HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE IN THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. +IN OTHER WORDS, WE CAN REACH THEIR STAGE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE 80S SHOWED THAT POLITICAL STABILITY WAS NEEDED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. +IN THIS RESPECT, WE MUST BE CIRCUMSPECT AND BE SELF-RESTRAINED (IN EXERCISING OUR FREEDOM IN A DEMOCRACY) FOR POLITICAL STABILITY,+ HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WON HIS SECOND ROUND OF APPLAUSE WHEN HE ASKED A QUESTIONER WHAT GOOD WOULD DEMOCRACY DO IF THE PEOPLE WERE NOT DISCIPLINED IN EXERCISING THEIR FREEDOM AND CONTINUE TO OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT AFTER GOVERNMENT.

HE ALSO SPOKE ON ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THE PROBLEM POSED BY VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

HE ALSO FELT THAT JAPAN, WITH ITS HUGE SURPLUSES, SHOULD INVEST MORE IN ASIA APART FROM RELOCATING ITS INDUSTRIES TO THE REGION. --  
MORE

1611MST 19 02 90

D444

U E278 AAE  
MAHATHIR-SUMMIT 5 KUALA LUMPUR

FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, MALAYSIA WITH ITS LIMITED MANUFACTURING CAPACITY, NEEDED CAPITAL AND INVESTMENTS.

+AS A MATTER OF FACT, THAT IS WHAT IS HAPPENING IN MALAYSIA WHERE MORE THAN 25 PERCENT OF ITS FOREIGN INVESTMENTS ARE FROM JAPAN, CREATING NEW JOBS AND GENERAL PROSPERITY,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE THAWING OF THE COLD WAR BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION HAD EASED TENSION IN THE REGION.

+BUT, IT IS NOT ALL THAT GOOD (THIS THAWING OF THE COLD WAR) BECAUSE WE NEED A BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO SO THAT WE CAN HAVE A CHOICE... IF ONE WIND IS SO STRONG AND IT SHOULD GO WRONG, THEN WE ARE IN FOR IT,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA

1613MST 19 02 90