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MAHATHIR-COMMONWEALTH

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 12⁹⁰ (BERNAMA) -- THE COMMONWEALTH HAS NOW BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED AS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS WHOSE DECISIONS ARE OF IMPORTANCE OUTSIDE THE ORGANISATION, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND ATTITUDES AMONG ITS MEMBER COUNTRIES HAD TRANSFORMED THE COMMONWEALTH INTO A COHESIVE AND DYNAMIC GROUPING, HE SAID WHEN ADDRESSING A LUNCHEON OF THE MALAYSIAN BRANCH OF THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY TO MARK COMMONWEALTH DAY HERE.

+THE COMMONWEALTH TODAY HAS SHED MANY OF THE NEGATIVE TRAITS OF ITS FORMER SELF, AND ADOPTED MANY PROGRAMMES OF ACTION REFLECTING THE ASPIRATIONS OF MEMBER COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THE DEVELOPING ONES,+ HE SAID.

+WE ARE BEGINNING TO SHARE MANY OF THE THINGS THAT WE COLLECTIVELY POSSESS AND IT MAY NOT BE LONG BEFORE WE MAY BE ABLE TO PROBABLY SHARE THE +COMMON WEALTH+ THAT THE COMMONWEALTH HAS,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THOUGH IN THE PAST THE COMMONWEALTH HAD INITIATED VARIOUS FORMS OF COOPERATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS MEMBERS, SUCH AS THE COLOMBO PLAN AND COMMONWEALTH FUND FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION, ITS VIEWS WERE DIVERGENT AND INEFFECTIVE OVER MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES.--MORE
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+AND MORE LAMENTABLE WAS THE INDIFFERENCE ON THE PART OF SOME SENIOR COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS TO THE PLEAS AND CRIES FOR UNDERSTANDING BY THE LESS FORTUNATE MEMBERS REGARDING THEIR PROBLEMS, AND FORTUNATELY THIS STATE OF AFFAIR IS NO LONGER VALID,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER ASSURED THAT MALAYSIA WOULD CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMONWEALTH AND WORK CLOSELY WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

DESPITE BEING A SMALL DEVELOPING NATION, MALAYSIA WAS PREPARED TO SHARE ITS EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH AS WELL AS WITH THOSE OUTSIDE THE GROUPING, HE SAID.

LATER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS MADE A LIFE MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY BY ITS MALAYSIAN BRANCH CHAIRMAN TAN SRI V.M. HUTSON.

THE LONDON-BASED SOCIETY HAS 40 BRANCHES IN COMMONWEALTH MEMBER COUNTRIES.--BERNAMA
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