

D176

R E587 AAE

MAHATHIR-AWARD

FROM ABDUL RAHMAN SULAIMAN (P)

CARACAS, AUG 2 (BERNAMA) -- VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ WEDNESDAY NIGHT DESCRIBED PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD AS ONE OF ASIA'S CONTEMPORARY LEADERS WHO HAS SUCCEEDED IN TURNING AN ESSENTIALLY DEVELOPING THIRD WORLD COUNTRY INTO A MODERN AND ADVANCED NATION. *Oversea trips.*

PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD BEEN TO MALAYSIA TWICE, FIRST AS A MEMBER OF THE SOUTH COMMISSION A FEW YEARS AGO AND THEN TO ATTEND THE GROUP OF 15 (G-15) SUMMIT IN KUALA LUMPUR IN JUNE.

HE SAID THAT ON THE FIRST OCCASION, HE WAS GENUINELY SURPRISED OVER WHAT HE SAW IN THE COUNTRY.

+I MUST CONFESS THAT BEFORE THE VISIT, I THOUGHT, AND I BELIEVE MOST VENEZUELAN'S SHARE MY VIEW, THAT MALAYSIA WAS STILL A BACKWARD COUNTRY,+ HE SAID IN AN IMPROMPTU SPEECH AT A CEREMONY DURING WHICH THE TWO LEADERS EXCHANGED DECORATIONS AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE +LA CASONA+ HERE.

THE PRESIDENT BESTOWED ON DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR VENEZUELA'S HIGHEST AWARD, THE +ORDER OF LIBERATOR+, WHICH IS RESERVED FOR FOREIGN HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WHO HAD FOUGHT IN DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMANITY. -- MORE

1419MST 02 08 90

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R E588 AAE

MAHATHIR-AWARD 2 CARACAS

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, ON BEHALF OF THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG, CONFERRED ON PRESIDENT PEREZ MALAYSIA'S HIGHEST AWARD, THE DARJAH MANGKU NEGARA (DMN).

PRESIDENT PEREZ SAID: +DURING MY SECOND VISIT, I BECAME ENVIOUS OVER THE MANNER BY WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STEER YOUR COUNTRY INTO PROGRESS.+

+THE SUCCESS OF YOUR LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, INDUSTRIALISATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IS SOMETHING WHICH COUNTRIES OF THE THIRD WORLD INCLUDING OURSELVES CAN EMULATE,+ HE ADDED.

PRESIDENT PEREZ SAID THAT IT WAS AFTER THE FIRST VISIT THAT HE BEGAN TELLING HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE CABINET AND OUTSIDE THAT SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION COULD REALLY WORK.

HE SAID COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH HAD BEEN LOOKING UPON THE NORTH FOR GUIDANCE FOR FAR TOO LONG WHILE KNOWING VERY LITTLE OF EACH OTHER, ADDING THAT +I AM NOW FULLY DETERMINED TO MAKE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION A REALITY+. -- MORE

1425MST 02 08 90

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R E590 AAE
MAHATHIR-AWARD 3 CARACAS

THE VENEZUELAN LEADER SAID HE SPECIALLY INVITED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR FOR THIS STATE VISIT TO COINCIDE WITH THE LAUNCHING OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE SOUTH COMMISSION SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY HERE IN RECOGNITION OF THE MALAYSIAN PREMIER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRUGGLE OF THE THIRD WORLD MOVEMENT.

THE PRESIDENT SAID DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD FOUGHT TIRELESSLY FOR THE THIRD WORLD CAUSE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, THE SOUTH COMMISSION AND LATELY THE G-15.

+WE ARE GRATEFUL THAT YOU HAVE KINDLY ACCEPTED OUR INVITATION TO BE HERE AT THIS JUNCTURE,+ HE SAID.

THE MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER, IN HIS REPLY, THANKED HIS VENEZUELAN HOST FOR HIS KIND WORDS AND THE AWARD BESTOWED ON HIM.

+I AM NOT SURE THAT I REALLY DESERVE THEM+, HE SAID.

HE WAS CONFIDENT OF A FRUITFUL OUTCOME OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ AND A SERIES OF TALKS BETWEEN PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES DURING HIS FIVE-DAY STAY HERE.

HE HOPED THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD RESULT IN THE CREATION OF A CONCRETE FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. -- BERNAMA

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