

D593

R E101 AAE MES DHC

(ATTN FEATURES EDITORS: THIS IS THE FIRST OF SEVERAL FEATURES BERNAMA FEATURES SERVICE WILL BE PUTTING OUT OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS TO MARK NATIONAL DAY ON AUG. 31).

BERNAMA FEATURE

EMBARGO: FOR USE ON OR AFTER WEDNESDAY, ^{DN} AUG. 15: 1990 -

NATIONAL DAY FOCUS:

MAHATHIR -- A LASTING HURRAH

BY TAI SING ONN

② Dr. Mahathir.

KUALA LUMPUR: MALAYSIA WHICH WILL CELEBRATE ITS 33RD YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE ON AUG. 31, ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY IN THE LAST DECADE OF THE PRESENT CENTURY, IS RICHLY BLESSED IN ITS CHOICE OF PRIME MINISTERS.

WHEN THE COUNTRY ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE ON AUG. 31, 1957, ITS FIRST PRIME MINISTER WAS TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN, WHO HAD BEEN ITS CHIEF MINISTER.

IT WAS FITTING THAT THE MAN WHO LED THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION FOR INDEPENDENCE TALKS IN WHITEHALL SHOULD BE THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY.

PRINCE AND PREMIER, HE BROUGHT TO HIS OFFICE HIS URBANE CHARM AND TRECHANT WIT.

IN TRUTH, HE BROUGHT MUCH MORE. HIS GOODWILL, TOLERANCE AND SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE HELPED TO BRING ABOUT UNITY IN DIVERSITY AMONG ITS POLYGLOT PEOPLES WHO HAD CONSCIOUSLY BEEN KEPT APART BY A SEEMINGLY BENIGN BUT SELF-SERVING COLONIAL PRESENCE.

TUN ABDUL RAZAK HUSSEIN WHO TOOK OVER WAS THE ONE WHO QUIETLY BUT DRAMATICALLY CHANGED THE FACE OF THE POVERTY-STRICKEN COUNTRYSIDE. -- MORE

1253MST 13 08 90

D600

R E104 AAE MES DHC

MAMATHIR 2 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

ARMED WITH HIS +RED BOOK+ OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT HE TRAMPED THE COUNTRYSIDE BUILDING ROADS INTO THE RURAL HEARTLAND OF THE COUNTRY, LAYING OUT MASSIVE NETWORKS OF ELECTRICITY, WATER AND PUTTING UP SCHOOLS, BRIDGES, COMMUNITY HALLS IN AREAS WHICH WERE WITHOUT FOR DECADES.

THIS RURAL, NATIVE SON'S LIFE'S WORK WAS PREMATURELY ENDED WITH HIS SUDDEN DEATH.

HE WAS SUCCEEDED BY TUN HUSSEIN ONN, A GENTLE GIANT OF A MAN, KNOWN FOR HIS QUIET WAYS WHICH BELIE INNER RESERVES OF STRENGTH. THOSE WERE SPACIOUS DAYS UNDER HIS PREMIERSHIP.

THE COUNTRY RECENTLY MOURNED THE PASSING AWAY OF ITS THIRD PRIME MINISTER WHO HAD FOUND HIS WAY INTO THE HEARTS OF MALAYSIANS WITH HIS QUIET STYLE OF LEADERSHIP. -- MORE

1303MST 13 08 90

MAHATHIR 3 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

THE COUNTRY'S FOURTH AND PRESENT PRIME MINISTER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD BURST UPON THE LOCAL POLITICAL SCENE IN 1981 WITH SUCH COSMIC EFFECT, TAKING OVER FROM TUN HUSSEIN ONN, AFTER A SPELL IN THE POLITICAL WILDERNESS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WILL BE LEAVING A LASTING HURRAH WHEN HE FINALLY MAKES HIS EXIT FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE.

THIS IS THE MAN WHO IN THE PAST ONE DECADE HAS DONE MORE THAN ANY OTHER LEADER TO GIVE MALAYSIANS AT HOME AND ABROAD, A SENSE OF PRIDE IN BEING CALLED MALAYSIANS.

WHEN INDEPENDENCE WAS GRANTED MORE THAN THREE DECADES AGO, THE WHITE MAN WAS TO HAVE LAID DOWN HIS BURDEN. -- MORE
1304MST 13 08 90

D602

R E106 AAE MES DHC
MAHATHIR 4 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

NOT SO, IN MALAYA AND LATER MALAYSIA, AND FOR THAT MATTER IN OTHER NEWLY INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR WANTED THE NEW RELATIONSHIP TO BE ONE OF EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN PROGRESS.

WHAT WAS HAPPENING WAS HURTFUL AND CARVED DEEP WOUNDS IN OUR NATIONAL PYSCHE.

IT WAS DATUK SERI MAHATHIR WHO STOOD FOURSQUARE AND ADMONISHED THE NORTH FOR ITS CHURLISH TREATMENT OF THE DEVELOPING AND POOR COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH.

IF FOR NOTHING ELSE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HAS EARNED FOR MALAYSIANS DIGNITY, RESPECT IN THE WORLD COMMUNITY OF NATIONS WHERE IDEALLY NO ONE SHOULD ME MORE EQUAL THAN ANOTHER. -- MORE
1306MST 13 08 90

D605

R E109 AAE MES DHC
MAHATHIR 5 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

HE DID THIS IN SO MANY WAYS TO LET THE NORTH KNOW THAT WHEN YOUNG NATIONS FREE THEMSELVES FROM THE SHACKLES OF COLONIAL RULE, THEY INTEND TO SAVOUR FREEDOM TO THE FULL AND NOT BE HAMPERED IN THEIR GROWTH BY UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES AND OTHER UGLY REMINDERS OF THEIR COLONIAL PAST.

THUS IT WAS WHEN HE LAUNCHED THE +DON'T BUY BRITISH+ CAMPAIGN IN THE EARLY 80S WHICH RESULTED IN A HEALTHIER RESPECT BY THE BRITISH FOR THE POPULATION OF WHAT WAS ONCE PART OF THEIR FAR-FLUNG EMPIRE BEFORE THE SUN SET ON IT.

FROM THEN, HIS STATURE GREW, ONE GIANT STEP AFTER ANOTHER, WITH HIS SALLIES INTO INTERNATIONAL WORLD FORUMS, THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (ICDAIT) IN VIENNA, THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR, JUST TO MENTION A FEW.

ALSO, THE JUST-ENDED SOUTH MEETING IN CARACAS. AGAIN, IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE DELEGATES, THE EARNEST, SINCERE CALL FOR NORTH-SOUTH CO-OPERATION AND SPIRIT OF SELF-RELIANCE AMONG SOUTH COUNTRIES.

HE HAS REACHED THAT SATISFYING PLANE WHICH BALLADEER KIPLING SAYS OCCURS WHEN TWO STRONG MEN (FOR THAT, READ MINDS OR EAST AND WEST OR NORTH AND SOUTH) MEET FOR THEN THERE IS NEITHER EAST NOR WEST. YES, THOUGH THEY COME FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, FROM NORTH OR SOUTH. -- MORE

D607

R E110 AAE MES DHC
MAHATHIR 6 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

IN GATHERING NEW-FOUND RESPECT AND ESTEEM FROM WORLD STATESMEN FOR HIMSELF, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HAS ALSO GARNERED IT FOR HIS FELLOW MALAYSIANS.

THEY CAN TRAVEL THE WORLD AND BE PROUD TO BE COUNTED AS MALAYSIANS.

THIS FRESH STATURE HAS ALSO MELLOWED THE MAN.

HIS DETRACTORS SAY THAT THE MAN DOES NOT SMILE OFTEN ENOUGH.

FRIENDS AND INTIMATES SAY THAT BEHIND THE PUBLIC FACE BEATS A WARM, GENTLE HEART.

NOW, NOT SO MUCH DRIVEN BY THOSE FORCES WHICH HAD IMPELLED HIM TO MAKE SOMETHING OF HIMSELF AND HIS COUNTRY, THERE IS A SOFTER IMAGE THESE DAYS.

THE GRUFFNESS, THE DOUR LINES, ARE HARDLY EVIDENT. -- MORE
1316MST 13 08 90

D609

R E112 AAE MES DHC
MAHATHIR 7 (FEATURE) (EMBARGO)

HE HAS REASON ENOUGH TO SMILE. HE HAS PUT THE COUNTRY ON SUCH A GOOD WICKET THAT IT IS POISED FOR GREATER CHALLENGES, CONFIDENT OF ITS ABILITY TO DEAL WITH WHATEVER THE FUTURE THROWS UP.

HE IS SET TO REMAIN AT THE HELM FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED THIRD TERM AS PRIME MINISTER OF THE COUNTRY AFTER INDEPENDENCE, WHAT WITH TALK ABOUT THE GENERAL ELECTION BEING AROUND THE CORNER.

AND WHEN HE FINALLY DECIDES TO CALL IT A DAY, WHY THERE IS TALK EVEN NOW THAT HE IS EXCELLENT MATERIAL FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERALSHIP OF THE UN.

WHAT MORE, INDEED, CAN ANY MAN ASK?

TO HAVE ACHIEVED A QUANTUM LEAP FOR HIS COUNTRY IN TERMS OF RESPECT, DIGNITY, SELF-WORTH AND A VIBRANT, NEW IDENTITY FOR HIS FELLOW MALAYSIANS.

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL BUT COLOUR IT A RAINBOW HUE FOR WHAT WE NOW HAVE, NOBODY CAN TAKE IT AWAY FROM US.

TO LEAVE BEHIND WHEN THE DAY IS DONE, A LASTING HURRAH. --

BERNAMA

1320MST 13 08 90