

CNS3272

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Mahathir-Commonwealth (with pix)

KUALA LUMPUR, April 25<sup>9/</sup> (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the Commonwealth Dental Association (CDA) which was formed to help upgrade the standard of the world's dentistry, particularly among its member countries.

In a glittering ceremony marked by traditional dances and a batik fashion show at the Putra World Trade Centre here, he said that as knowledge in health and dentistry was ever increasing and changing, the role of the CDA was particularly significant in the area of continuing education.

+In this respect, an association such as this can provide the right forum for the exchange of information and experience amongst member countries, + he said.

To mark the inauguration of the CDA, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir hit the Malay traditional gong three times to the applause of the 500-odd members from the grouping.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir told the association that its formation should not only benefit the more advanced countries but also the smaller nations striving for better oral health for their countries. -- more

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+The more than one billion population within the member countries must ultimately derive some benefit by the coming together of their National Dental Associations to form this CDA. Otherwise, this whole effort would not be worthwhile, + he said.

The formation of the CDA was mooted about 10 years ago.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said: +In our effort to address the worldwide problems confronting oral health, we must remember that we are dealing with countries with different needs and different capabilities+.

For this reason, the objectives to form the CDA must be clearly defined, deliberated and actively pursued.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also urged dental practitioners to upgrade their professional services and keep abreast of the latest development in knowledge and technology in dentistry in view of the increasing demand for better health care. -- more

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He also said that he was honoured to be the one among Commonwealth prime ministers to launch the association.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku, in his message, said he was delighted with the formation of the CDA.

He said the association would be a good forum to exchange experience and expertise among Commonwealth countries.

S. Prince Apabio of Nigeria has been elected as the association's president for a two-year term with Malaysia's Dr A. Ratnanesan as the president-elect for the 1993-94 period. -- Bernama

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