

PM happy with outcome of Commonwealth summit

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HARARE: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is happy with the Commonwealth summit as Malaysia was able to state its stand on such fundamental issues like democracy and human rights.

He said Malaysia's presence was most beneficial as it had an opportunity to express its views against pressure from the developed nations on such issues.

The Prime Minister, known for his cutting but compelling

style, has become the *de facto* leader of the developing nations, articulating their feelings and aspirations.

No fewer than 10 Commonwealth heads of government called on him during the summit. They included British Prime Minister John Major, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke and leaders from New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Mauritius, Cyprus and the Seychelles.

He also had lunch meetings with leaders from 10 Caribbe-

an nations.

India, the world's biggest democracy, adopted a similar stand as Malaysia, arguing that while many developing nations were busy with raising the living standard of its people, the Commonwealth should not preoccupy itself with such issues.

Malaysia's stand has been that if development aid is to be linked with democracy and human rights, a proper mechanism, or a third party, must be set up to interpret and judge what is democracy.

Dr Mahathir, who begins a four-day visit to Tanzania today, said he was able to meet many leaders to not only forge closer relationships with them but also able to raise bilateral issues.

On South Africa, he said the High Level Appraisal Group of which he is the chairman had been given a fresh mandate to consider action to be taken to quicken the process of a return to non-racial democracy.

He said Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief

Emeka Anyaoku had been asked to visit South Africa and he would tour the 11 member nations to brief them on the outcome of the visit.

Dr Mahathir's visit to Tanzania is the first by a Malaysian Prime Minister, reports *Bernama*.

The visit will enable Malaysia to step up bilateral co-operation, particularly in trade and investments, said Dr Mahathir.

His itinerary includes talks with Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi.