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MAHATHIR: NO OVERNIGHT CHANGE TO THE UN

Mahathir-UN

From Ahmad Zukiman Zain (1)

JAKARTA, Sept 2 (Bernama) -- Democratizing the United Nations and its Security Council will take time as those in strong position will resist any change in the present structure, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the only thing for Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries to do was to harp on it and apply pressure at the UN Assembly and the various committees of the world body.

+It is not something that will happen overnight...obviously the people who are in a strong position in the UN will resist any change,+ he told a press conference at the Jakarta Convention Centre where he is attending the 10th NAM Summit.

He said countries, which had emerged strong and contributed a lot more to the UN than some permanent members of the Security Council, might back them up if they continued calling for change.

Dr Mahathir was asked to elaborate on his speech to the summit yesterday where he called for a change in the UN, saying the victors of World War II cannot be allowed to permanently affect the relative positions of the nations of the world. -- more

▼02/09/22-30MST

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Mahathir-UN 2 Jakarta

Asked whether he was optimistic or pessimistic about the UN democratization process, he said he was feeling both, adding that things could be worse without the UN.

+What we need to do is not to abolish it, but to improve it,+ he said.

Asked whether Malaysia was seeking a place in the Security Council, Dr Mahathir said the country have had its turn albeit the +unpleasant+ experience.

+It's not a pleasant thing to be asked to make decisions which sometimes we do not like to be involved in,+ he said.

On his suggestion for a name change for NAM, Dr Mahathir said it could only be achieved if member countries agreed.

Saying he did not have a name to propose, the Prime Minister said the name could be made out, if necessary, after the role and future directions of the movement were defined. -- more

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Mahathir-UN 3 (last) Jakarta

He dismissed a suggestion from a reporter that the movement was a waste of time and money since it could not even address problems such as Yugoslavia.

+The world need some counter balance...today only the rich countries in the North are in a position to dictate everything they like including breaking international laws and ethics....+

+Somebody will have to tell them that they shouldn't...that's one of the things NAM can do,+ he said.

When the same reporter rebutted to say NAM failed to do so on this occasion, Dr Mahathir said: +We did except they didn't listen, I did it yesterday.+

Following the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the Prime Minister said dialogues between the North and South should not be confined to just one forum but could include direct talks between the G-15 representing the South and the rich nations of G-7. -- Bernama.

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