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Mahathir-South  
SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION BEARING FRUIT  
(EMBARGO: For release after 10 pm tonight)

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 8<sup>1993</sup> (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight South-South cooperation has begun to bear fruit with the initiatives and programmes undertaken at the forum of G-15 developing countries.

"Malaysia will continue to share its experiences and contribute within its modest means to make South-South cooperation more effective," he said at an official dinner in honour of visiting Mauritius Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth at his residence, Sri Perdana.

The South Investment, Trade and Technology Data Exchange Centre (SITTDEC) launched during the G-15 third summit in Senegal in November was one initiative to promote cooperation and trade among developing countries, he added. Malaysia hosted the inaugural G-15 summit in 1990.

Describing SITTDEC as the "yellow pages" for the business community, Dr Mahathir invited Mauritius to subscribe to the newly-established facility based here as it could contribute towards the island republic's economic growth. -- more

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Sir Anerood arrived today for a four-day official visit. He last visited Malaysia to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1989.

Dr Mahathir said: "Many countries in the South have developed skills and expertise as well as agricultural and industrial capacities which can be of benefit to other countries.

"In this context, Malaysia firmly believes that South-South cooperation is not only possible but also practical."

He fondly recalled memories of his first official visit to the Mauritius capital Port Louis five years ago that laid the foundation of enhanced economic collaboration between the two countries.

(Four Malaysian companies are operating in Mauritius with investments in a commercial bank, five-star hotel and a fully-integrated knitwear plant).

Dr Mahathir said: "Our trade has significantly increased in the last four years. More importantly, the distance between our two countries has been bridged with the operation of the joint weekly air services by Malaysia Airlines and Air Mauritius." -- more

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(Mauritius, located off the southeast coast of Africa, is about six-and-a-half hours by air from Kuala Lumpur. It has a population of 1.1 million.)

Despite the notable progress in bilateral economic relations, Dr Mahathir said many areas still remain unexplored.

He urged the private sector of both countries to seize the opportunities for increased trade, investment and economic cooperation.

On the international scene, Dr Mahathir said as members of the South, Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth, the two countries shared views on many issues, one of which was the concern with regard to South Africa.

"While we welcome the changed attitude and efforts of the Pretoria regime to scrap the remaining vestiges of apartheid, Malaysia strongly feels that more rapid progress is necessary for the creation of a truly non-racial and democratic South Africa," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was encouraged by the political and economic adjustment programmes towards the liberalisation and deregulation currently enforced in many states in Africa. -- more

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Mahathir-South 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Mauritius, which could take pride in its pioneering role in introducing similar reforms many years ago, had become a role model for its neighbours, he added.

He said: "The end of the Cold War had initially promised some new hope for the world to work for an equitable and just world order.

"Such hope appears dim judging from recent developments in many parts of the world.

"What we see before us is the propensity of the strong and the powerful to inflict heavy-handed actions on weaker states. The selective application of UN Resolutions is a case in point."

He said in the economic domain, free trade was no longer free with various tariff and non-tariff barriers being introduced such as eco-labelling, self-serving human rights indices and discriminatory and punitive taxes.

"These deliberate obstacles are threats to the economic well-being of many developing countries for whom external trade constitutes an increasingly important source of their foreign exchange earnings," he added.

-- Bernama

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