

CNS1646

R GE 23-10 00221 EF384

aae

Mahathir-democracy

TOO MANY STANDARDS FOR DEMOCRACY, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

From Kuah Guan Oo

LIMASSOL (Cyprus), Oct 23⁹³ (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told his Commonwealth colleagues that there are too many double and triple standard for democracy in the world. ② (Thy overseas)

"Really, there is a standard for every occasion," he said during the continuation of the executive session of the Commonwealth summit where they discussed global political and economic issues.

Briefing newsmen after the morning session where the Malaysian leader was among the 11 speakers, Commonwealth spokesperson Patsy Robertson said Dr Mahathir had asked why Hong Kong, which has been run for more than 100 years as something less than democracy, had to be democratic very quickly when it had to be handed back to China.

"Why now?" the prime minister asked.

Dr Mahathir also said that there had been talks on sanctions against China, similar to the one imposed on South Africa but he wanted to know how they were going to influence China.

According to Robertson, the Malaysian leader said there were too many organisations which set themselves up as arbitrators of the world, telling poor nations what to do and defining democracy the way they saw it. -- more

KGO RM

▼23/10/09-28MST

R GE 23-10 00208 EF385

aae

Mahathir-democracy 2 Limassol

Dr Mahathir, who expressed the hope that the Commonwealth would stand up for true democracy, also made a strong call on the 50-member organisation to apply pressure on the United Nations "so that people who espoused democracy, will be protected by those who believe in democracy."

Noting that a good salesman always promised good after-sale service, Dr Mahathir said: "So, people who sell democracy in the world must be prepared to provide some after sale service to keep democracy alive."

The prime minister who had earlier alluded to the changes in Russia, eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia, said it was difficult for them to change to a free market after more than 70 years of communist rule.

When the tanks and guns were pointed at the Russian Parliament at the earliest time in a dispute, it indicated to him the lack of understanding of democracy and he did not think that conditions were propitious for Russia.

Dr Mahathir said unless the West was prepared to help and defend democracy the people in these (former Communist) states were likely to go back to the "bad old days." -- more

KGO RM

▼23/10/09-28MST

aae

Mahathir-democracy 3 (last) Limassol

The prime minister who also reiterated Malaysia's position on the Bosnian issue, spoke on the Cypriot problem, expressing the hope that the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots would talk together to resolve their differences.

Malaysia, he said, would support action by the Commonwealth to help as Malaysia had officers serving with the UN peacekeepers in Cyprus. He also said he wanted these officers to be home soon.

Dr Mahathir also spoke of the big trading blocs in North America and Europe which were keeping out the products of developing countries.

Malaysia, he said, was trying to sell its cars to Cyprus but found the tariff so high that they could not come in.

He told (Cyprus) President Glafkos Clerides that he knew that Cyprus was trying to join the European Community with a (trading) system "which is not going to be helpful to us." -- Bernama

KGO RM

▼23/10/09-29MST