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Mahathir-Dialogue

MAHATHIR ADVOCATES NEW ECONOMIC REALITY

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today proposed that Asia and America form a joint venture to create a single global commonwealth to make the 21st century the century of the world.

He said the consequences of such a new economic reality could be productive for all.

"It will be the real mechanism which will transform the whole political, strategic and psychological make-up of the world.

"We will indeed have a new world," the Prime Minister said in his key-note address at the Third Pacific Dialogue at Istana Hotel here.

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Also present was Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir said a single interdependent global commonwealth was not possible in the great age of colonialism because the world was divided into exclusive economic blocs, each oriented towards its centre of the imperial cosmos.

"However, it is today possible for the first time in human history," he said.

The Prime Minister said if Asia and America could be joint-venture partners in prospering each other, they would surely be the catalyst for a single global commonwealth of common prosperity.

This, he said, would surely result in a century that is "not Asian, not American, nor European, nor even African, but a World Century".

"Idealistic perhaps. But Man, working towards an idea must achieve something nearly that," he said.

The Prime Minister said other countries could also join hands with Asia and the US in the joint venture to create a productive partnership and a new World, "a global commonwealth such as the world has never seen, worthy of the hopes of mankind and worthy of the 21st century".

Dr Mahathir reiterated that the next century was not the Asian Century but rather the century when the world takes precedences over the narrower interests of nations and continents.

He also called on the West to give Asia a "little understanding, a sense of fairness, a little time and a little space".

Calling on the West to admit that the threat posed by Asia was minimal, Dr Mahathir said of late there has been a crusade for leveling the playing fields.

The Prime Minister asked: "When the contest is between giants and midgets, would a level playing field be enough to ensure a sporting chance for the midget."

"Surely many of the businessmen of the West and even politicians play golf and understand the need for handicaps," he remarked.

Another point stressed by the Prime Minister was that America's enterprising corporations with so much talent and creativity should "Go West" to the Far East, "to go beyond the boundaries of their continent and imagination".

"Be our companion on our long journey to full modernity. Help us to

build a new Asia," he said.

Stressing that Asia can no longer sit down and take injury and insult in stoic silence, Dr Mahathir said: "We of Asia will increasingly demand and we have a right to demand a little maturity and sophistication on the part of those who wish to analyse and proselytise..." --BERNAMA

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