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Mahathir-South

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION EFFORTS SUCCEEDING, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- Efforts by countries in the South to enhance their cooperation are succeeding, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the Group of 15 (G-15) heads of government meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, beginning on Sunday is a progressive stepping up of the cooperation.

"We are continuing our efforts to build greater cooperation and interaction between the countries from the South," he told reporters after witnessing the signing of two agreements on the KL LinearCity project at the Bukit Kiara Equestrian & Country Club.

He said this when asked to comment on his trip to Harare and the points that he would bring up.

Dr Mahathir will speak on behalf of Asia at the opening session on Sunday. He is expected to speak just after the opening address by Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Apart from Malaysia and Zimbabwe, the G-15 comprises Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela and Chile.

Asked about the statement by the Backbenchers Club chairman Ruhanie Ahmad, who took a swipe at politicians who indulged in money politics when debating the 1997 Budget in Parliament yesterday, Dr Mahathir said the important thing was to stop money politics.

"Many talk about money politics but it is not something that is easy to wipe out. We try, the important thing is we try."

Asked about a so-called International Transparency listing which placed Malaysia as among the corrupt countries, Dr Mahathir said it was easy for them to set themselves up as judge and prosecutor.

"If we want to do our own study, there is corruption in Italy, there is corruption in Germany, there's corruption in France, there's a lot of ministers involved in Britain's corruption and we should actually ban our people from going there or spending money there because these are corrupt countries.

"It's easy to set yourselves up as judge and prosecutor. I can set up also but of course Malaysians are very shy, they won't say nasty things, they leave it to me to say nasty things." -- BERNAMA

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