

24 JUL 1997

Asean-Excerpts

EXCERPTS FROM DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD'S OPENING ADDRESS

"It is a measure of the pragmatism of these countries that they continued to meet as ASEAN, even though bilateral relations between certain members were strained" ... on the early years of the grouping

"Asean has proven that regional cooperation among developing countries is possible and can produce results."

"The world should conclude that membership of ASEAN would have a steadying influence on domestic politics and would help the progress of member countries" ... in reference to Myanmar's membership in Asean despite objections from the US, Europe and Japan.

"We appreciate the offer to defend us but how can we be sure the promised help will be forthcoming when we see so many countries being abandoned to their fates as soon as they were in trouble."

"Economic prosperity is really the answer to our security problems because with prosperity ASEAN will be taken seriously and its views respected."

"We want to embrace borderlessness but we still need to protect ourselves from self-serving rogues and international brigandage" .... on the current attack on some Asean currencies.

"I believe there is an ASEAN formula for success, for how else can we explain why every ASEAN country has shown rapid economic growth and political stability."

-- BERNAMA

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