

Unity is strength, G-77, told

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From HARDEV KAUR

HAVANA, Wed: Developing countries can use their combined strength to influence international policies although they may not be able to do so individually, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said they should work together to be effective.

"But weak though each of us may be, our combined strength is very consider-

able," he said when addressing the first Summit of the Group of 77 (G-77) developing countries.

Dr Mahathir said the gathering of 133 developing countries in Havana might be regarded as a manifestation of "our unity and solidarity".

He reminded the gathering that "while it is easy to meet, it is not easy to act together. Therein, lies our weakness".

He noted that the rich

were apparently more united than the poorer countries.

"Theirs is a small group of only seven countries. Although they may have varying degrees of differences among them, they close ranks very rapidly if their dominance is challenged".

Should there be new ideas in the social, economic or political fields, they quickly come up with their own interpretations designed to benefit them.

"Thus, we see them foist-

ing on the world their moral values, their political systems, and now, economic globalisation. The South has no choice but to react to their interpretations."

"Reacting limits the choice and is less rewarding," he added.

On arrival at the Jose Marti international airport yesterday, Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, was met by Cuban Vice-President Jose Ramos Fernandes.