

08/09/2000

Bulky and unwieldy, says PM of G-77 decision-making

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Describing the Group of 77's decision-making process as "bulky and unwieldy", the Prime Minister said today it is still unwilling to delegate powers to a smaller group of member nations.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the G-77, an alliance of developing countries pushing for greater South-South Co-operation, could only function as an effective body if it delegated certain powers to a smaller number of Heads of Government.

However, Dr Mahathir said he did not see this happening in the near future because each of the 133 Heads of Government wanted to be involved in all decision-making processes. The group now comprises 133 nations.

He said this had rendered negotiations with the Group of Eight industrialised nations to narrow the economic disparity between the North and South, impossible.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters on arrival at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport from his working visit to the United States where he attended a special meeting of G77 leaders.

The meeting was dampened by poor attendance due to short notice given to the Heads of Government.

Dr Mahathir said although participatory action on the part of all the 133 leaders was ideal, he did not see how this could be carried out.

"But I don't think it's practically going to work at all," he said.

Dr Mahathir said compared to the G-8, which groups the world's most developed countries, it was more difficult for the G-77 to conduct meetings due to the size of the grouping.

According to him, the only time that the views of the G-77 could be put across to the G-8 was after the convening of the inaugural G-77 summit meeting in Havana last April.

Despite the effort, Dr Mahathir said the G-77 leaders could not meet their counterparts from the G-8.

"The G-8 did not think they should consider the views of the South at all," Dr Mahathir said.

On his visit to Motorola Inc while in the US, Dr Mahathir said the government felt that it could work together with the company so that some of the research and development work by the chip producer could be carried out in Malaysia.

The Prime Minister said if this became a reality, the efforts could encourage increased investments from Motorola in the country.

On the report lodged on Tuesday by some members of Pas and Keadilan on the parental status of a boy named Mohamed Hafiz Abu Hassan who is linked to former Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar, Dr Mahathir said this was a form of witch hunt.

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