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Mahathir-Grouping

TOO MANY GROUPINGS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

KUALA LUMPUR, June 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that there are now too many organisations for developing countries.

Due this, the heads of state and government had a very taxing time attending meetings and it was impossible to gather all the leaders at the same time and venue, he said.

"The main thing that we can do is to have a smaller group but given some form of flexibility by the others so that we would be able to react to many threats against us and then of course we will be more effective," he said

He said this during a dialogue at the international seminar on "The Impact of Globalisation on the Islamic World: Issues and Challenges in the 21st Century," here.

He was responding to a question from the floor regarding the effectiveness of the Group of Eight Developing Countries (D8).

About 140 participants from the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) are attending the three-day seminar organised by the Foreign Ministry and the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR).

The prime minister said a "single, small and effective" organisation was what the developing countries needed to effectively react and put up stands against the developed nations.

For example, he said, to date there were groupings of 54 Muslim countries, 130 non-aligned countries and the Group of 77 (G77) which consists about 130 countries, and it was impossible to get all the heads of state and government to sit down together.

"Against this huge collection of governments, we have a Group of Seven countries (G7), very powerful countries. They can just easily ring up each other to make a decision and when they make a decision, it can be harmful to developing nations," he said.

On the D8, Dr Mahathir said it was a special group of developing countries which focused more on helping each other to develop and perform good work.

The D8 comprises Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turkey and Bangladesh, which are all members of the much larger OIC.

-- BERNAMA

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