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LID-Mahathir (CPTM)

CPTM, A USEFUL BODY FOR COMMONWEALTH LEADERS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

By: Ahmad Fuad Yahya

LANGKAWI, July 31 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has hailed the useful role played by the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM), as it has put him in contact with many Commonwealth leaders since the Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) was introduced in 1995.

Dr Mahathir said he had conceived the idea of the LID to bring people from developing countries together in order to discuss common problems and exchange information.

"We believe that our discussions had contributed towards firming up personal relations within the Commonwealth and at the same time, of course, they are able to understand the process of governing a country much better and how to develop their country," he said in an interview with the Smart Partners Living Database of the CPTM.

The Living Database contains the comments of many key proponents of the smart partnership movement.

Dr Mahathir said when he became Prime Minister in 1981, he was not too enamoured with the Commonwealth and had in fact put the grouping very low on his list of priorities.

"I did not attend Commonwealth meetings for several sessions because my belief was that in the Commonwealth, the wealth was not common, (for) it belongs only to a few countries.

"That is why I was not too attracted towards the Commonwealth (in the past)," he explained.

However, he said former Commonwealth secretary-general Sir Shridath Ramphal had persuaded him to attend a Commonwealth meeting and he attended one held in the Caribbean Islands.

Subsequently, he attended the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting in Vancouver, Canada.

"In the meantime, our country was developing very fast and we realised that our experience might be useful for other Commonwealth countries," he said.

-- BERNAMA

AFY SHY SD