

22 OCT 2003

Mahathir-Neighbour

M'SIA TO CONTINUE "PROSPER THY NEIGHBOUR" PHILOSOPHY, SAYS DR M

DILI (Timor Leste), Oct 22 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will continue with its "prosper-thy-neighbour" philosophy so that they too can taste development, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said a rich neighbour would be to the benefit of Malaysia because they could become the market for Malaysian-made goods and would not cause any problems that could spill over to other countries.

He said the philosophy could be used not only for close neighbours but also to countries far away from Malaysia.

Citing Sept 11, 2001 terror attack as an example, Dr Mahathir said although the incident happened in New York, it had an impact on Malaysia, he said when speaking at a dinner with Malaysians here in conjunction with his three-day visit to Timor Leste beginning today.

Dr Mahathir is the first foreign head of government to make an official visit to this country since its independence in May 2002.

He is accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

On Timor Leste, Dr Mahathir said he was confident the newly independent nation could achieve the level of development like in Malaysia.

He said the situation in Malaysia was similar to that in Timor Leste now when it attained independence in 1957 and had to face various challenges to develop the country to what it is today.

Dr Mahathir hoped Malaysians working in Timor Leste would be good to the locals and be prepared to help them.

"By doing so, we'll have a good name...we do not want to be arrogant," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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