

Pineapple cannery told: Try other fruits

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JOHORE BARU, Sun.
— Fima chairman
Dr. Mahathir Mohamad suggested last night that the government-owned Pineapple Canneries of Malaysia venture into the canning of other local fruits.

He said this will enable the company's two factories at Pekan Nenas and Pulai Sebatang to overcome the effects of stagflation as the future of pineapple may be not so bright.

Dr. Mahathir, who is also Minister of Education, said stagflation was hitting the world and although prices were high, profits were

meagre.

He was speaking at the company's 10th anniversary celebrations at its factory in Pekan Nenas last night. Also present were the Deputy Minister for Co-ordination of Public Corporations, Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, Speaker of the Johore State Assembly, Datuk Abdullah Sudin, and the State Assemblyman for Gelang Patah, Encik Yunus Sulaiman.

Small profits

Dr. Mahathir said it was currently difficult to sell pineapples overseas and if this worsened, steps would have to be taken to can other fruits as well.

He urged all involved in production especially the workers, to concentrate on overcoming the problems faced by the industry.

However, he said: "Although we are facing pressures now, don't despair. Let us all work towards our targets so that the two factories will become successful."

The solutions

He said since the company was formed 10 years ago, it had faced many problems but these have been solved since he took charge as Fima chairman about a year ago.

Among the steps he had taken to solve the problems were:

- Agreement of Federal Government to put in another \$12 million;
- Setting up of a responsible and disciplined union to represent the workers;
- Reorganisation of administration of the company;
- Achieving higher prices of canned pineapples.

The future

Dr. Mahathir however said that in the last two months, the market for canned pineapples had not been so good and orders had been reduced.

He stressed the importance of co-operation between the management and the workers of the two factories in productivity.

Dr. Mahathir said although he was Minister of Education as well, he would try his best to devote as much time as he could to the company in order to put it on a sound footing.

He said when everything was running smoothly, he would step down and concentrate all his efforts in the Ministry of Education.