

MAHATHIR

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(EMBARGO FOR AUTOMATIC RELEASE AT 9 P.M., JAN. 11)

KUALA LUMPUR, JAN. 11 (BERNAMA) -- THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENTS HAS DECIDED THAT FUTURE APPROVAL FOR EXPATRIATE POSTS WILL BE GIVEN SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE APPROVAL OF PROJECTS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED SAID TONIGHT.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE FEDERATION OF MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURERS (FMM) HERE, HE SAID. THE ACTION COMMITTEE ON INCENTIVES (ACI) UNDER THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY WOULD NOW RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND RECOMMEND TO THE MINISTER NOT ONLY THE APPROVAL OF THE PROJECT AND ITS APPROPRIATE INCENTIVE BUT ALSO THE NUMBER AND THE DURATION OF TIME ALLOWABLE FOR EXPATRIATE POSTS.

DR. MAHATHIR WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, SAID THE ACI WOULD ALSO CONSIDER AND RECOMMEND THE APPROVAL OF KEY POSTS IN MANUFACTURING PROJECTS.

HE HOPED THAT THE NEW PROCEDURE WOULD CUT DOWN DRASTICALLY THE LENGTH OF TIME TAKEN FOR COMPANIES TO GET APPROVAL OF THEIR EXPATRIATE POSTS. -- BERNAMA MORE 1947/YF

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HE SAID IF PROBLEMS CONTINUED TO EMERGE, THE CABINET COMMITTEE WOULD REVIEW EVEN THIS PROCEDURE TO SEE HOW FURTHER STREAMLINING AND EFFICIENCY COULD BE ACHIEVED.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ANNOUNCE OTHER MEASURES TO FURTHER STREAMLINE PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATIONS OF PROJECTS AND TO ORVIATE THE NEED FOR MANUFACTURERS TO APPLY O SEVERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR VARIOUS APPROVALS.

ON BUMIPUTRA PARTICIPATION IN EQUITY, EMPLOYMENT AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS, HE REITERATED THAT IT WAS NOT THE INTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO PRESS THE ISSUE TO THE EXTENT OF HAMPERING THE EFFICIENT OPERATIONS OF COMPANIES.

+IT IS CERTAINLY ANTITHETICAL TO GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT BUMIPUTRA EMPLOYEES MAY BE LESS PRODUCTIVE THAN THEIR NON-BUMIPUTRA COUNTERPARTS

+HOWEVER, THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH BUMIPUTRAS MUST NOT BE TAKEN AS AN EXCUSÉ FOR NOT RECRUITING AND TRAINING BUMIPUTRA PERSONNEL IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS PARTICULARLY AT THE SUPERVISORY AND MANAGERIAL LEVELS,+ HE ADDED. -- BERNAMA MORE 1850/YF

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THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID THE SUPPLY OF BUMIPUTRAS TRAINED IN THE VARIOUS PROFESSIONS WAS BEING SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED BY GOVERNMENT TRAINING INSTITUTIONS FROM TIME TO TIME.

IF SUPPLEMENTED BY THE TRAINING PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN BY THE VARIOUS COMPANIES, THE GOVERNMENT'S TARGET OF 30 PER CENT BUMIPUTRA PARTICIPATION WOULD BE ACHIEVED BEFORE 1990.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL CO-ORDINATION ACT, DR. MAHATHIR SAID UP TO JAN. 5 THIS YEAR, ONLY 458 OUT OF 4,000 EXISTING INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY HAD APPLIED FOR LICENSES TO THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

HE STRESSED THAT THE DEADLINE FOR OBTAINING LICENSES FOR THOSE INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS COVERED BY THE ACT STILL REMAINED AT APRIL 30 THIS YEAR AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF EXTENDING IT.

HE ASSURED THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAT THE FINAL AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT WOULD ONLY BE DONE AFTER ALL THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS HAD BEEN FULLY DISCUSSED WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY WOULD BE CONVENING SHORTLY A SERIES OF MEETINGS THROUGH THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE ACT TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, INCLUDING THE CONDITIONS ON THE LICENSES APPROVED FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS. -- BERNAMA MORE 1954/YF

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DR. MAHATHIR ALSO CALLED ON THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO RESPOND MORE FAVOURABLY AND BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH MEANINGFUL SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION IN TRADE FAIRS AND TRADE MISSIONS.

THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, HAD BEEN CONFRONTED WITH THE PROBLEMS OF LOCATING MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN BOTH TRADE FAIRS AND TRADE MISSIONS.

THE FREQUENT EXCUSE WAS LACK OF EXECUTIVES TO PARTICIPATE, LACK OF PRODUCT COMPETITIVENESS IN TERMS OF PRICING AND QUALITY AND, IN MANY CASES, LACK OF FUND DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY ONLY IMPOSED A VERY NOMINAL CHARGE FOR PARTICIPATION.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT THE GOVERNMENT STOOD TO GAIN DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY WITH ANY INCREASE IN EXPORTS.

HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT'S PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS WERE AIMED AT ASSISTING THE MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS IN MAKING INROADS INTO THE OVERSEAS MARKETS FOR THEIR PRODUCTS.

- BERNAMA MORE 1950/B

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UNLESS THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY REPONDED MORE FAVOURABLY, THE EXPORT TARGETS AS ENVISAGED IN THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN WOULD NOT BE REALISED, HE SAID.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THIS YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FURTHER INTENSIFY ITS EXPORT PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS TO EXPLORE NEW MARKETS AND TO CONSOLIDATE EXISTING ONES.

A TOTAL OF SEVEN TRADE MISSIONS WOULD BE SENT TO SELECTED COUNTRIES IN THE EEC, AUSTRALIA, JAPAN, THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND AFRICA.

IN ADDITION, ARRANGEMENTS WERE ALSO BEING MADE FOR MALAYSIA'S PARTICIPATION IN TEN TRADE FAIRS OVERSEAS.

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO CONTINUE TO ADOPT THE POLICY OF INVITING LEADING TRADE OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSMEN FROM MAJOR MARKET COUNTRIES TO VISIT MALAYSIA TO ACQUAINT THEMSELVES WITH THE VAST ARRAY OF THE COUNTRY'S PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FOR EXPORTS, HE SAID.

- BERNAMA MORE 1953/BW

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EARLIER, FMM PRESIDENT TUNKU TAN SRI MOHAMED BIN TUNKU BESAR BURHANUDDIN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO DRAW UP A LIST OF PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCTS SUBJECT TO LICENSING UNDER THE PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1976.

THE BILL, PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT RECENTLY, EMPOWERS THE PRIME MINISTER TO EXEMPT FROM THE LICENSING REQUIREMENT OF THE ACT CERTAIN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES RELATING TO PETROLEUM AND PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCTS.

HE SAID THE FMM WAS STILL NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR AS TO HOW THE APPLICATION OF THE BILL WOULD AFFECT THOSE ENGAGED IN THE MANUFACTURE, MARKETING OR DISTRIBUTION OF PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCTS.

TUNKU TAN SRI MOHAMED ALSO EXPRESSED THE FMM'S APPRECIATION FOR THE POSITIVE RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S CALL FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE INDUSTRIAL CO-ORDINATION ACT.

HE SAID THE FMM HAD SUBMITTED A COMPREHENSIVE MEMORANDUM TO THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT SUGGESTING AMENDMENTS TO THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED ON MANUFACTURING LICENSES, THE REDUCTION OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROLS AND THE SIMPLIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES. - BERNAMA 1955/BW