

# More bumiputras in business now: Mahathir

N.S.T. 12 (BA) REJAL ARBEE. (1)

KOTA KINABALU, Wed. — Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today the New Economic Policy has brought a gradual structural change in the economic activities of the country, with greater involvement of bumiputras.

There have also been indications of greater efforts by the private sector to fulfill the Government's social and economic policy, he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister, opening the \$30 million Kinabalu International Hotel here this evening, said the hotel was a shining example of what could be achieved by the bumiputras.

## Plane delayed

The hotel is wholly owned by bumiputras, 75 per cent of them Sabahans.

Dr. Mahathir arrived here today with his wife, Dr. Siti Hasmah, in an RMAF Hercules 3130 for a five-day visit.

The arrival was delayed for about an hour because the RMAF Fokker F28 jet he was to have flown in developed mechanical trouble.

He was given a ceremonial welcome complete with red carpet and a guard-of-honour mounted by men of the 2nd Royal Malay Regiment, and was introduced to State VIPs by the Chief Minister, Datuk Harris Salleh.

Dr. Mahathir and Dr. Siti Hasmah were later granted an audience by the Yang Dipertua Negeri, Datuk Hamdan Abdullah, and Datin Dulimah at the Istana.

This afternoon, Dr. Mahathir was briefed by Datuk Harris on develop-

ment projects being carried out and planned for the State.

Speaking after the briefing, he called for greater co-operation and understanding among politicians, State Government officials and Federal officers to ensure the full implementation of the projects.

Should there be friction between the three groups, the State would suffer.

He was thankful that whatever differences that had arisen between State and Federal officers in Sabah had now been overcome.

Later, in opening the hotel, Dr. Mahathir said that dynamic changes were taking place in Sabah, increasing the pace of development.

He praised the State Government for having a dynamic rural development programme that could speed up the restructuring of the social and economic sector in the State.

The Government's policy of encouraging local processing of timber would give an impetus to industrialisation.

He pledged the Federal Government's continued support and assistance for Sabah.

## State dinner

Earlier, the chairman of the hotel, Datuk Haji Mohamed Yassin Haji Hashim, said it was possible for bumiputras to engage in any kind of industry with determination and hard work.

Dr. Hasmah, who had a separate programme, visited a health centre, a family planning association and a nurses training school this afternoon.

Tonight, Dr. Mahathir and Dr. Hasmah attended a State dinner at the Istana. Present were Datuk Hamdan and Datin Dulimah, the Chief Minister and his wife Datin Rupiiah, and other State dignitaries.

This afternoon, Dr. Mahathir received two cheques, each for \$67,832, from teachers and other staff of the State Education Department. The cheques, presented by the Director of Education, Encik Hussein Ahmad, are for the Tun Razak and Tun Fuad Foundations.