

BANTING, JAN. 19 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA HAS BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD BIGGEST PRODUCERS OF ELECTRONIC SEMI-CONDUCTORS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE CONFIDENCE OF MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES IN THE COUNTRY WAS ALSO MOUNTING, HE SAID IN A SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE NEC ELECTRONIC (M) SDN. BHD. IN TELOK PANGLIMA GARANG HERE.

THE SPEECH WAS READ BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY ENCIK ABDUL MANAN OSMAN.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER, WAS CONFIDENT THAT MALAYSIA COULD MAINTAIN ITS POSITION IN THIS FIELD.

HE SAID SEVERAL BIG COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES HAD SHOWN INTEREST IN INCREASING INVESTMENTS HERE.

ON THE NEC FACTORY, HE SAID IT REFLECTED THE CONFIDENCE OF FOREIGN INVESTORS IN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STABILITY. -- BERNAMA MORE 1115/SZ

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JAPAN HE SAID LED OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE TOTAL INVESTMENTS IN MALAYSIA. JAPANESE INVESTMENTS APPROVED BY THE END OF 1976 TOTALLED \$434.7 MILLION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT AN ENCOURAGING FACTOR ABOUT THE FACTORY WAS THAT IT WAS SITUATED IN A LESS DEVELOPED AREA SUCH AS TELOK PANGLIMA GARANG.

THIS REPRESENTED ANOTHER SUCCESS IN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO ATTRACT INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS TO THE LESS DEVELOPED AREAS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF PROBLEMS FACED BY FACTORIES SUCH AS THE LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES ESPECIALLY THOSE SITUATED IN THE LESS DEVELOPED AREAS.

STEPS WERE BEING TAKEN TO CORRECT THE SITUATION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID INDUSTRIALISTS STILL HAD DOUBTS ABOUT SETTING UP FACTORIES IN TELOK PANGLIMA GARANG AS THE AREA HAD YET TO BE GAZETTED AS A FREE TRADE ZONE AS PLANNED. -- BERNAMA MORE 1117/SZ

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THE MATTER HAD BEEN RAISED BY THE MINISTRY AND DISCUSSIONS WERE BEING HELD WITH THE SELANGOR GOVERNMENT AND THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED.

HE HOPED THAT THE MATTER COULD BE SETTLED SOON TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE FACTORY IN GETTING TAX EXEMPTIONS ON COMPONENTS AND RAW MATERIALS.

THE NEC FACTORY SET UP AT A COST OF \$14 MILLION, IS EMPLOYING ABOUT 500 LOCAL WORKERS.

THIS IS THE SECOND PROJECT BY NEC IN MALAYSIA, THE FIRST IS A JOINT VENTURE WITH PERNAS. -- BERNAMA MORE 1120/SZ

DR. KOJI KOBAYASHI, ON BEHALF OF NIPPON ELECTRIC CO. LTD. (NEC) AND NEC MALAYSIA SDN. BHD., SAID THE COMPANY SET UP ITS FACTORY IN MALAYSIA AS IT WAS THE MOST SUITABLE CENTRE FOR SUPPLYING ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT TO THE WORLD MARKET.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOREIGN INVESTORS WAS ENCOURAGING.

DR. KOJI SAID THE FACTORY'S SALES LAST YEAR WAS PROJECTED TO BE MORE THAN \$11 MILLION. -- BERNAMA 1125/SZ