

ALOR STAR, MAY 20 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD URGED CONSUMERS' ORGANISATIONS TODAY TO ACT CAUTIOUSLY IN SAFEGUARDING THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONCERNED ABOUT SOME CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATIONS SEEKING PUBLICITY BY MAKING BASELESS ACCUSATIONS.

SUCH ALLEGATIONS WOULD NOT ONLY ADVERSELY AFFECT MAJOR COMPANIES BUT ALSO JEOPARDISE THE LIVELIHOOD OF PETTY TRADERS AND HAWKERS, HE SAID.

HE HOPED THE ASSOCIATIONS WOULD INSTEAD INFORM THE GOVERNMENT IF THERE WAS ANY MATTER THAT NEEDED INVESTIGATION OR ACTION.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER, SAID THIS IN A SPEECH READ BY HIS POLITICAL SECRETARY, MEGAT JUNID MEGAT AJOB, AT THE OPENING OF THE KEDAH CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING HERE.

ON THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT, HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT IN THAT IT INDIRECTLY HELPED NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND BENEFITTED ALL THE PEOPLE. — BERNAMA MORE 1927/LK

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ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SAID, THE MOVEMENT SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS AGAINST BUSINESS BECAUSE ITS OBJECTIVE WAS TO LOOK AFTER THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS AND NOT TO FIGHT INVESTORS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR URGED THE KEDAH CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION TO ACT POSITIVELY TO STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION SO THAT ALL CONSUMERS WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN IT.

HE SUGGESTED THAT IT LAUNCH A MEMBERSHIP DRIVE AND STEP UP ACTIVITIES TO INFORM CONSUMERS OF THEIR RIGHTS, ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT A STRONG CONSUMER MOVEMENT COULD BECOME AN EFFECTIVE ONE TO WIPE OUT UNHEALTHY BUSINESS PRACTICES AND GIVE CONSUMERS A SENSE OF FAIR PLAY. — BERNAMA 1930/LK