

MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 26 (BERNAMA) — DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. (MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT FROM SEPT. 1 THE FEDERAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WOULD BE A TRULY ONE-STOP AGENCY WHICH INVESTORS CAN DEAL WITH FROM THE STAGE OF PROJECT NEGOTIATION TO IMPLEMENTATION AND THEREAFTER.

HE SAID THAT A CENTRAL UNIT, STAFFED BY SENIOR OFFICERS DRAWN FROM VARIOUS KEY MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, WOULD BE OPERATIVE AT THE FIDA HEAD-QUARTERS HERE FROM NEXT MONTH.

VERY MUCH A BRAINCHILD OF DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HIMSELF, THE UNIT WAS A RESPONSE TO THE NUMEROUS CALLS BY INVESTORS TO REDUCE BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE INVOLVED IN THE OBTAINING OF APPROVAL FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS.

OPENING THE FMM TRADE FAIR HERE, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR HOPED THE CREATION OF THE CENTRAL UNIT WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS BY INVESTORS. — BERNAMA MORE 1104/SZ

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NO04 (F)
MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID: +AS IN THE CASE OF MOST INNOVATIONS, I AM NOT SAYING THAT THERE WON'T BE TEETHING PROBLEMS.

+SHOULD THERE BE SHORTCOMINGS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE SYSTEM, WE SHOULD LIKE YOU TO TELL US WHAT THEY ARE AND, BETTER STILL, LET US HAVE YOUR SUGGESTIONS ON HOW WE CAN IMPROVE ON THE SET-UP. +

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER, SAID IT HAD BEEN WIDELY ACCEPTED THAT THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN MALAYSIA HAD BEEN ACCORDED A KEY ROLE IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE TARGETS OF THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN.

IN RECOGNITION OF THIS, HE ADDED, THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPARED NO EFFORT IN ITS TASK TO ENHANCE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE WITHIN WHICH INVESTORS HAD TO OPERATE.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSTANTLY ENDEAVOURING TO EVOLVE NEW IDEAS AND NEW STRATEGIES AIMED AT HELPING THE EXISTING AND POTENTIAL INVESTORS. — BERNAMA MORE 1108/SZ

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NO05 (F)
MAHATHIR 3 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR HAD EMERGED AS THE STAR PERFORMER IN MALAYSIA'S EXPORTS DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1978.

THE RATE OF GROWTH DURING THE PERIOD OF 13.2 PER CENT IN THE EXPORTS OF MANUFACTURES OVER THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF LAST YEAR WAS THE HIGHEST WHEN COMPARED WITH THE GROWTH RATES OF OTHER EXPORTS.

IN 1977, GROSS EXPORTS OF MANUFACTURES AMOUNTED TO \$2,810 MILLION WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR 18.7 PER CENT OF TOTAL EXPORTS AS AGAINST \$1,720 MILLION AT 4.5 PER CENT IN 1967.

HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT THE RANGE OF INDUSTRIES WHICH MALAYSIAN AND FOREIGN INVESTORS COULD GO INTO TO SERVE THE DOMESTIC MARKET WAS UNFORTUNATELY LIMITED BY THE SIZE OF LOCAL DEMAND.

THE IMPETUS FOR ACCELERATED EXPANSION OF THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR HAD THUS TO COME FROM THE GROWTH OF EXTERNAL DEMAND. — BERNAMA MORE 1110/SZ

MAHATHIR 4 KUALA LUMPUR

IN THIS CONTEXT, HE HIT OUT AT CERTAIN INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES FOR ADOPTING PROTECTIONIST MEASURES.

HE SAID: +IT IS A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN THAT EFFORTS BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THAT HAVE SOUGHT TO SUSTAIN THE GROWTH OF THEIR ECONOMIES, IN PART THROUGH THE GROWTH OF NON-TRADITIONAL EXPORTS, HAVE CONTINUED TO BE IMPEDED BY THE PROTECTIONIST MEASURES OF CERTAIN INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES.

+THE PROBLEM, AS ECONOMISTS HAVE POINTED OUT, IS THAT THE ECONOMIES OF SUCH INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES HAVE SHOWN THEMSELVES UNWILLING TO ADJUST TO THE CHANGES REALITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET-PLACE.

+THE REALITY IS THAT SEVERAL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAN NOW OUTDO THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES IN A NUMBER OF AREAS — TEXTILES AND FOOTWEAR, FOR EXAMPLE.

+PROTECTIONISTS DENY THIS, OF COURSE, MAINTAINING THAT THE PRESENT LACK OF COMPETITIVENESS IN THEIR INDUSTRIES IS DUE TO THE USE OF UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES ABROAD.

+CLOSER EXAMINATION USUALLY REVEALS THAT IT IS THE ARGUMENTS OF THE PROTECTIONISTS THAT ARE UNFAIR RATHER THAN THE TRADE PRACTICES OF THEIR FOREIGN RIVALS. +

— BERNAMA MORE 1113/SZ

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N007 (F)

MAHATHIR 5 KUALA LUMPUR

HE HOPED THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES WOULD DO MUCH MORE THAN PAY MERE LIP SERVICE TO BRINGING ABOUT THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER WHICH CONCEPT HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY MOST OF THEM IN PRINCIPLE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY AND POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF EXPORT PROMOTION TO SUSTAIN THE TREND IN THE GROWTH OF MANUFACTURED EXPORTS.

THE PRINCIPAL MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST LOCAL MANUFACTURES IN EXPORT PROMOTION WAS THROUGH ORGANISING PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIRS AND DESPATCHING TRADE MISSIONS ABROAD AND INVITING POTENTIAL BUYERS OVERSEAS TO VISIT MALAYSIA.

ANOTHER TWO NEW MEASURES WERE THE EXPORT CREDIT REFINANCING FACILITY AND THE MALAYSIA EXPORT CREDIT INSURANCE BERHAD.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH EFFORTS MUST BE SUPPLEMENTED BY THOSE OF THE EXPORTERS THEMSELVES. — BERNAMA MORE 1115/SZ

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N008 (F)

MAHATHIR 6 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR OFFERED AN OPEN INVITATION TO MANUFACTURERS TO JOIN HIM IN HIS FORTHCOMING INVESTMENT PROMOTION MISSIONS TO THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT REALISED THE TREMENDOUS SOURCES THAT LIE UNTAPPED IN A NUMBER OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MANY OF WHICH WERE UNDERGOING STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THEIR ECONOMIES.

THESE CHANGES CAUSED BY ESCALATING COSTS OF LAND, LABOUR AND RESOURCES, AND MORE RECENTLY THE RISING VALUE OF CERTAIN CURRENCIES WERE FORCING SEVERAL MANUFACTURERS IN CERTAIN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO LOOK TOWARD COUNTRIES LIKE MALAYSIA WHERE THEY COULD FIRSTLY CONTINUE TO PRODUCE AT CONSIDERABLY REDUCED COSTS AND SECONDLY SUSTAIN IF NOT ENLARGE THEIR EXPORT SALES BY BEING ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR COMPETITIVENESS.

HE URGED MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURERS TO MOVE FORWARD AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES THAT WOULD COME IN THE WAKE OF SUCH CHANGES.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN ALLEGED THAT THE MALAYSIAN PRIVATE SECTOR HAD BECOME +FAT AND FLABBY+ AND HAD LOST ITS DRIVE AND DYNAMISM DUE TO THE COMFORTABLE LIFE IN MALAYSIA.

— BERNAMA MORE 1117/SZ
MAHATHIR 7 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID: +I WAS TOLD THAT THIS IS THE REASON THAT WE HAVE TO GO OUT CONSTANTLY TO SEEK FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL AND ENERGY TO FUEL OUR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

+I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THIS ASSESSMENT OF THE MALAYSIAN PRIVATE SECTOR IS NOT TRUE.+

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO TOUCHED ON THE INDUSTRIAL COORDINATION ACT AND SAID HE WAS HAPPY TO NOTE THAT A GREAT MAJORITY OF THOSE CONCERNED HAD ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT THE ACT WAS HERE TO STAY AND WERE PREPARED TO LIVE WITH IT.

HE SAID THEY NOW HAD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOVERNMENT'S TRUE INTENTIONS BEHIND THE PROMULGATION OF THE ACT.

IT WAS REFLECTED BY THE ENCOURAGING RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM MANUFACTURERS IN THIS COUNTRY AND OVERSEAS, HE ADDED.— BERNAMA
MAHATHIR 8 KUALA LUMPUR (REOPEN ITEM 003)

MORE THAN 90 LOCAL COMPANIES ARE TAKING PART IN THE EXHIBITION WHICH ENDS ON SEPT. 10.

MEANWHILE FOUR EAST MALAYSIAN DELEGATIONS ARE VISITING THE FAIR. THEY ARE THE SANDAKAN GROCERS IMPORTERS ASSOCIATION, THE SARAWAK MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION, THE KOTA KINABALU CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GROUP AND THE MIRI CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

THE VISIT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE +FMM TOUR PACKAGE+ THAT WAS OFFERED TO EAST MALAYSIAN BUSINESSMEN BY MAS EARLIER THIS YEAR.

— BERNAMA 1455/S7