

# Help bumiputra businessmen, agencies urged

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Sun.** — Government agencies and statutory bodies were today reminded to help bumiputras in their business ventures and not to take over their business opportunities.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Government agencies should only take over the business concerns of bumiputras if the projects were too big for them to handle.

Bumiputras needed a lot of help and guidance in their business enterprises. As such, the Government had set up various agencies and institutions to help them in commerce and industry.

"The Government's objectives in setting up the various business agencies and statutory bodies are two-pronged," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

"Firstly, whenever bumiputras are not

capable of participating in any business activity, the Government agencies should come in to replace them.

"Secondly, these agencies should help bumiputras whenever their assistance are required by those bumiputras who are capable of carrying out the business projects themselves."

## Advice

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said that in the second case, the participation by the Government agencies and institutions should be indirect.

Speaking at a seminar held by the Malay Chamber of Mines here, he said the Government faced many problems in implementing the New Economic Policy.

The NEP was formulated to correct the imbalances in income among the various races.

"The bumiputras are lagging far behind in terms of capital and ex-

pertise in the commercial sector and it will not be possible to achieve the objectives of the NEP if they are left unaided in their business ventures," the Deputy Prime Minister added.

"They need a lot of assistance from the Government not only in the form of advice and credit facilities, but also in the form of direct participation."

He said that on many occasions the people assigned to implement the NEP through the various Government agencies did not really understand their role and responsibilities.

"There are cases when a member of a particular chamber of commerce, for example, becomes a chairman or director, or a Menteri Besar, and tends to forget the time when he was a member of the chamber of commerce," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir.

"When he was a member of the chamber of commerce, he had urged

the Government to help bumiputra businessmen, but when he is given power, he no longer understands the problems of bumiputra businessmen.

"I have noticed this development and as a Federal Minister, I have tried to advise these people. But even the advice of the Federal Government are sometimes totally rejected by them.

"We face a serious problem because these people occupy influential positions and have the power of making decisions," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir added that whenever any business proposal was referred to them for approval, they always asked themselves why the State Government should make a decision that would benefit others.

In such cases, he added, the people would prefer the Government agencies to undertake the project and earn the profits.