

Govt agency to help Malay contractors

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ALOR STAR, Fri. — The Government will set up a central agency under the Prime Minister's Department to closely monitor the activities of bumiputra contractors, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the agency would be placed directly under the Management and Manpower Planning Unit (Mampu) and would be headed by a senior Government officer

Opening the annual meeting of the National Bumiputra Contractors' Association (Kedah branch) at the Balai Besar here, he said the agency was being set up to co-ordinate tenders for Government contracts among the various Ministries.

"The agency will also unify classification of bumiputra contractors so that there would be no confusion among contractors regarding their status," he added.

"At present, there are

numerous cases where bumiputra contractors are placed in different classes by Government Departments leading to unnecessary difficulties among them."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that he would personally look into the administration of the agency to ensure that bumiputra contractors were provided the proper impetus to advance in the building industry.

A computer would also be used to store data pertaining to Government tenders so that bumiputra contractors

would constantly be aware of such projects, he added.

He said the agency would collect data regarding tenders from the various Ministries for a period of a year and would channel this to bumiputra contractors.

At present, he said there were occasions where bumiputra contractors quoted smaller qualifications for tenders because of the keen competition for the contracts.

Problems

This, he added, would be avoided once the agency started its work as it would evenly distribute Government contracts to bumiputras according to their capabilities.

However, the Deputy Prime Minister did not discount the fact that bumiputra contractors would still face problems even with the formation of the agency if the present complacency among them continued.

On problems among bumiputras, he advised them to analyse their attitude first before approaching the Government for help.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said many contractors made unwise de-

isions in accepting large contracts running into millions of dollars when they did not possess the ability to carry them out successfully.

He urged bumiputras to work closely with the Chinese contractors, who were experienced in the industry, so that they could obtain indepth knowledge in the field.

He assured bumiputra contractors that the Government was always ready to provide the relevant training for those willing to learn more modern building techniques.