

Mahathir to MAS: Do us proud

NSunT - 4 APR 1982

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government wanted MAS, the national airline, to succeed and benefit the country although it is a small company.

The Prime Minister said: "We do not want MAS to become a white elephant — to take pride in having an airline only but gaining no benefits from its operations."

Speaking at a ceremony to bless MAS' first Boeing 747 at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said success for the airline called for good management and increased efficiency and dedication by its executive staff.

They should co-operate with one another as there was no room for "individualism" and "petty quarrels" in the management of MAS.

"There is no place for an inconsiderate attitude towards colleagues and lower ranking staff. All must work as a team, proud of the success of the airline as a result of teamwork and not individual effort," he said.

Hallmark

The airline's success also depended on good service by all concerned. This did not mean the cabin staff but ground workers as well.

Said the Prime Minister: "It should not be that we only smile sweetly when aboard the aircraft and when we land in our own country the smile is longer there.."

"Service with a smile must be an overall practice. Efficiency and proficiency must be the hallmark of MAS wherever its workers serve."

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said all the good practices should be observed because of pride in the national carrier's service.

It was most saddening, he said, to hear the sarcastic remark "that the situation in Malaysia is like that" when people compare the Malaysian service with that provided by another country.

"It is futile to be angry (over such a remark). What is necessary is to improve our perfor-

mance and automatically such sarcasm and criticism will disappear."

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir hoped his criticism would be received in the spirit it was made.

"The intention behind the criticism is so that we can hold our heads high and not bow in shame. As a Malaysian, I want to be proud of the success of our people and country. I am sure all Malaysians, irrespective of race, feel the same."

The Prime Minister wanted all levels of workers in MAS to improve their service to make the national carrier the best in the region, if not the world.

Legacy

An air service, he said, was no longer a luxury but a necessity. Therefore, the Government was prepared to spend money on such facilities.

He hoped the people would value and make good use of all the services provided in a manner that would enable many more after them to enjoy these facilities.

"We should not adopt the attitude that because the facilities provided do not belong to us, therefore, we do not look after them.

"We should look after all the facilities as a legacy of the country and reflect our good manners in using these at all times," he added.