

INTERVIEW - MAHATHIR

BY ABDUL KARIM SHUKOR

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 2, 83 (BERNAMA) - THE PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) ANNOUNCED THE CONCEPT OF MALAYSIA INCORPORATED LAST FRIDAY. ✓

SINCE THEN, THE CONCEPT HAS ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION AND RAISED MANY QUESTIONS.

IN A SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH BERNAMA, THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED THE CONCEPT AND DISCUSSED HIS EXPECTATIONS.

FOLLOWING IS THE FULL INTERVIEW.

- MORE 0930/BW

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Q: DATUK SERI, CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THE CONCEPT OF MALAYSIA INCORPORATED WHICH YOU ANNOUNCED LAST FRIDAY?

PM: JAPAN WAS FORMERLY KNOWN AS +JAPAN INCORPORATED.+ THE LABEL WAS GIVEN BY THE WESTERN COUNTRIES WHICH ACCUSED JAPAN OF BEING +JAPAN INCORPORATED+ BECAUSE THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR WORK VERY CLOSELY IN THE MARKETING OF ITS PRODUCTS. IN THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE, THIS COOPERATION BETWEEN THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR IS NOT GOOD. HOWEVER, IF THERE IS CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR, THE COUNTRY'S HOPE TO PROGRESS AND BECOME AN INDUSTRIALISED NATION IS MORE CERTAIN. AT PRESENT, THE ATTITUDE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICERS IS TO CONFRONT THE PRIVATE SECTOR. IF POSSIBLE, THEY TRY TO DENY WHATEVER THE PRIVATE SECTOR REQUIRES. WHATEVER IS GIVEN, IS DONE SO GRUDGINGLY. THERE IS, THEREFORE, CONSTANT CONFLICT BETWEEN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE GOVERNMENT RESULTING IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY BEING TIED UP AND PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH BEING HELD UP. THE REVENUE OF THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO HELD UP. SO IN THE CONCEPT OF MALAYSIA INCORPORATED, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER ITSELF A PART OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIALIZATION PROGRAMME. THIS MEANS THAT WHEREVER POSSIBLE, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD HELP THE PRIVATE SECTOR RATHER THAN BE A STUMBLING BLOCK, TO FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY. - MORE 0938/BW

ZCZC NO08 (F/S)  
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THERE MUST BE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BEGRUDGE THE SUCCESS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR EVEN IF INDIVIDUALS MAKE A LOT OF MONEY BECAUSE WHEN THEY MAKE A LOT OF MONEY, THE GOVERNMENT CAN ALWAYS TAX THEM AND USE THE MONEY FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

Q: IN LINE WITH THE NEW CONCEPT, YOU MENTIONED THAT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT SEVERAL GOVERNMENT-RUN AGENCIES MAY BE HANDED OVER TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR. DO YOU THINK, THE MALAYAN RAILWAY, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD BE TURNED INTO A CORPORATION?

PM: THERE IS A POSSIBILITY AND SUCH A SUGGESTION HAS IN FACT BEEN MADE. OBJECTION, HOWEVER, CAME FROM EMPLOYEES WHO WANTED TO REMAIN IN THE GOVERNMENT AND THUS IT HAS NOT BEEN TURNED INTO A CORPORATION. IT WAS FOUND THAT THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED JAPANESE NATIONAL RAILWAY IS NOT MAKING MONEY. THIS PROVES THAT GOVERNMENT-RUN ENTERPRISES USUALLY MAKE A LOSS. WE HAVE BEEN INCREASING GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN BUSINESS AND THE BUILDING OF INFRASTRUCTURE OVER THE PAST 10 TO 15 YEARS. IT SEEMS TO BE ACCEPTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY IS TO PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE HOWEVER, IN SOME COUNTRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, HARBOURS, RAILWAYS, ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AND OTHER BACK-UP SERVICES ARE BEING OPERATED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR. - MORE 0948/BW

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IN THE CASE OF THE MALAYAN RAILWAY, CAN BE DONE. WHAT WE HAVE NOW WE CAN HAND OVER TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR OR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS OF SUCH A NATURE COULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR BUT IN LINE WITH THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY.

Q: IS THERE ANY POSSIBILITY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAND OVER UNPROFITABLE SEDC PROJECTS TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR?

PM: YES, THE GOVERNMENT CAN DO SO, NOT ONLY WITH THE LOSING CONCERNS BUT ALSO WITH THOSE MAKING PROFIT. SEVERAL PROJECTS WHICH ARE NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT NOW CAN BE UNDERTAKEN IN A SIMILAR WAY.

Q: DATUK SERI, IS THE MALAYSIA INCORPORATED CONCEPT IN ANY WAY RELATED TO THE +LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE+ CAMPAIGN WHICH YOU WILL BE LAUNCHING ON MARCH 19?

PM: IN TERMS OF EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT MUST SHOW A GOOD EXAMPLE. AS AN EXAMPLE FOR THE COUNTRY TO FOLLOW, THE GOVERNMENT MUST PRACTISE WHAT IT PREACHES. THIS IS WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS STRESSING IN LINE WITH THE POLICY TO CREATE A GOVERNMENT THAT IS EFFICIENT AND TRUSTWORTHY. - MORE 0955/BW

ZCZC NO10 (F/S)  
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Q: IN THE COURSE OF BRIEFINGS WHICH YOU ATTENDED, YOU WERE NOTICEABLY CONCERNED BY THE LACK OF INNOVATION OF IMPLEMENTING OFFICERS ESPECIALLY AT THE MANUFACTURING AND PROCESSING LEVEL. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?

PM: TO KEEP WELL AHEAD IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION, OFFICERS SHOULD UPGRADE THEIR CAPACITY BY HAVING A GREATER INTEREST AND CLOSER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FUNCTIONS AND SKILLS INVOLVED. WHAT OUR GOVERNMENT IS DOING NOW IS TO UPGRADE THE SKILLS OF OUR OFFICERS.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS IN INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT OF MALAYSIA INCORPORATED?

PM: WE CANNOT EXPECT TO HAVE A GOOD LIFE UNLESS WE HAVE THE NECESSARY WEALTH WHICH MUST COME FROM OUR OWN EFFORT. IN OTHER WORDS, WE MUST BE PRODUCTIVE SO THAT WE CAN EARN HIGHER INCOMES TO SUPPORT A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING. IF NOT, THE END RESULT IS FAILURE. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED VERY UP-TO-DATE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURES, THESE FACILITIES HAVE NOT BEEN MAINTAINED PROPERLY NOR FULLY UTILISED TO DRAW THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT.  
- MORE 1003/BW

ZCZC NO11 (F/S)  
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WE SEE SO MANY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES JUST FRITTERING AWAY. FOR EXAMPLE, COMMUNITY HALLS, SCHOOLS, EVEN GOVERNMENT OFFICES. THESE HAVE NOT BEEN WELL UTILISED BECAUSE THESE FACILITIES ARE OF TOO HIGH A STANDARD FOR OUR CAPACITY TO MAINTAIN. WHAT WE WANT NOW IS FOR THE PEOPLE TO UPGRADE THEIR CAPACITY TO FINALLY ACHIEVE A BETTER INCOME WHICH WILL SUBSEQUENTLY MEAN MORE REVENUE FOR THE GOVERNMENT. IN TURN, WE CAN AVAIL OURSELVES OF MORE SUCH FACILITIES. THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES MUST LEARN TO LOOK AFTER THESE FACILITIES FOR THEIR OWN GOOD. - BERNAMA 1008/BW