

MAHATHIR-LOOK EAST
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84 P
KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 5 (BERNAMA) -- THE LOOK EAST POLICY WILL CONTINUE TO BE PURSUED AND THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY ATTEMPTS TO TURN BUMIPUTERAS AGAINST IT, (DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY. THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF ABOLISHING THE POLICY WHICH HAD BEEN FOUND TO BE TIMELY AND HAD BROUGHT DESIRED RESULTS.

+MALAYSIA IS BOUND TO BENEFIT GREATLY FROM THE LOOK EAST POLICY. DON'T TRY TO INSTIGATE BUMIPUTERAS INTO OPPOSING THE POLICY, + HE ADDED WHEN OPENING THE DAYABUMI COMPLEX--A 36-STOREY LAND MARK IN THE HEART OF THE CITY.

HE HIT OUT AT CRITICISMS AGAINST THE POLICY AND ATTEMPTS BY CERTAIN GROUPS TO MAKE THE DAYABUMI COMPLEX A SYMBOL TO BRING ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE POLICY.

HE SAID THAT SHOULD THERE BE ANY PROBLEMS OR INCIDENTS WHERE FOREIGNERS DID NOT ADHERE TO STIPULATED CONDITIONS OR DID NOT ACCORD APPROPRIATE TREATMENT TO THE LOCAL PEOPLE, THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE INFORMED AND THE PROBLEM RESOLVED THROUGH DISCUSSIONS. -- MORE --

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+LET US NOT BE TOO SENSITIVE, TO THE EXTENT OF REFUSING TO ACCEPT CRITICISM EVEN THOUGH WHEN WE ARE WRONG.

+FIND THAT MANY MISTAKES ARE MADE OVER AND OVER AGAIN BECAUSE WE DONOT LIKE TO BE CRITICISED AND ARE AFRAID TO BE HURT, + HE SAID.

IN DEFENDING THE POLICY, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID SINCE ITS IMPLEMENTATION THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY TO THE COUNTRY.

+THOUGH MOST OF THE LOCAL FIRMS DENY THAT THERE HAS BEEN TECHNOLOGY-TRANSFER, THE FACTS SHOW OTHERWISE, + HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS SATISFIED THAT TECHNOLOGY-TRANSFER HAS ONE OF THE BENEFITS ACCRUING FROM FOREIGN CONTRACTORS PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA.

IN PULAU PINANG FOR INSTANCE, A BUMIPUTERA FIRM COULD NOW PRODUCE THE LARGEST PRE-STRESSED CONCRETE BEAMS, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PULAUPINANG BRIDGE.

ANOTHER COMPANY IN THIS CITY ITSELF HAD SUCCEEDED IN PRODUCING CURTAIN WALL FOR THE DAYABUMI PROJECT. -- MORE 1345/WS

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE METHODS OF MANAGING BIG PROJECTS HAD ALSO BEEN EXPLAINED TO PERMODALAN NASIONAL BERHAD (PNB) AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

AT THE SAME TIME A LARGE NUMBER OF TECHNICIANS, ENGINEERS AND SKILLED PERSONNEL HAD RECEIVED ON THE SPOT TRAINING OR HAD BEEN TRAINED IN JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES AND BY THEIR FIRMS.

+WHAT CANNOT BE DENIED IS THAT BEFORE THE LOOK EAST POLICY, WE HAD ALSO AWARDED CONTRACTS AND HAD OBTAINED OUR SUPPLIES FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BUT THERE WERE NO ORGANISED TRAINING SCHEMES OR SCHOLARSHIPS ON A BIG SCALE FROM THOSE WHO BENEFITED FROM THEIR CONTRACTS IN MALAYSIA+9 DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY WAS ALSO RESPECTED BY SOUTH KOREAN AND JAPANESE FIRMS.

HE REITERATED THAT THE LOOK EAST POLICY DID NOT MEAN GIVING CONTRACTS OR OBTAINING SUPPLIES FROM THE COUNTRIES OF THE EAST BUT WAS AIMED AT LEARNING FROM THEIR WORK ETHICS, METHODS OF MANAGEMENT AND ACQUIRING TECHNOLOGY FROM JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA.

--MORE 1409/AN

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HE SAID CONTRACTS WERE AWARDED TO FOREIGN CONTRACTORS WHOSE OFFERS WERE FOUND TO BE THE BEST AFTER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ALL ASPECTS.

+LOW COST IS NOT THE ONLY FACTOR IN THE AWARD OF TENDERS WE KNOW HOW OFTEN LOW TENDERERS FINALLY END UP WITH PROBLEMS, ARE LATE IN COMPLETING THEIR WORK, SEEK ADDITIONAL PAYMENT AND SOMETIMES ABANDON THEIR WORK+, HE SAID.

+IF A FIRM USUALLY TAKES A LONG TIME TO COMPLETE A PROJECT AND ITS TENDERS ARE USUALLY HIGH BUT IN THIS PARTICULAR TENDER ITS QUOTATIONS ARE VERY LOW AND MAKES PLEDGES OF COMPLETING THE WORK IN A SHORT PERIOD, WE CANNOT BUT BE DOUBTFUL AS TO WHETHER THE CONDITIONS OF THE TENDER WILL BE FOLLOWED+.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR EXPLAINED THAT THE PAST PERFORMANCE OF THE TENDERER'S HIS SYSTEM OF CONSTRUCTION, QUALITY OF WORK AND OTHER FACTORS SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING WHO WON THE TENDER.

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THE PRIME MINISTER SAID SUCH CRITERIA WERE USED FOR ALL TENDERS WHICH WERE OPEN TO BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN FIRMS.

NOT ONLY THE GOVERNMENT BUT ALSO THE PRIVATE SECTOR USED SUCH CRITERIA AND THIS WAS NOT CONNECTED IN ANYWAY TO THE LOOK EAST POLICY, HE SAID.

HE WAS HAPPY WITH THE THIRD PHASE OF THE DAYABUMI PROJECT, AS ALL CRITERIA HAD BEEN CONSIDERED AND THE RESULT JUSTIFIED THE DECISION OF THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED IN AWARDING THE TENDER FOR THIS PROJECT.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID NOT ONLY THE CONDITION OF COMPLETING THE PROJECT IN 26 MONTHS WAS ADHERED TO, BUT THE QUALITY OF THE WORK WAS FOUND TO BE GOOD, TRAINING WAS PROVIDED TO LOCAL WORKERS AND BUMIPUTERA FIRMS WERE ABLE TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE PROJECT.

--BERNAMA 1440/AN