

MAHATHIR-PRIVATISATION  
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KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 25 (BERNAMA) -- THE GOVERNMENT IS CONFIDENT THAT THE PRIVATISATION POLICY WILL HELP SPEED UP THE ACHIEVEMENT OF NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) OBJECTIVES PROVIDED THERE IS NO SABOTAGE, PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD) SAID TODAY.

A STUDY HAD REVEALED THAT PRIVATISATION COULD BE DONE AT ONE GO OR IN STAGES.

HOWEVER, THE PROCESS OF TRANSFERRING SEVERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD TAKE TIME AS IT HAD TO BE CARRIED OUT WITH CARE, HE TOLD THE 35TH UMNO GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS UMNO PRESIDENT, SAID THE CONCEPT COULD ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES WITH CAREFUL AND THOROUGH EVALUATION BUT WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS THAT THE PEOPLE SHOULD NOT GET EXCITED AND START CRITICISING WHEN THE SLIGHTEST PROBLEM CROPPED UP.

EXPLAINING WHY MALAYSIA CHOSE THE PRIVATISATION POLICY - EARLIER THAN OTHER COUNTRIES, HE SAID THE SUCCESS OF THE CONCEPT WOULD BRING IN MORE REVENUE BECAUSE PRIVATE SECTOR SERVICES WERE MORE PROFITABLE --  
-- MORE 1126/LK

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HE ADDED THAT WITH THE SUCCESS, THE GOVERNMENT NEED NOT ALLOCATE LARGE SUMS FOR CERTAIN SERVICES AND THE MONEY COULD BE USED TO PAY FOR MORE FACILITIES FOR THE PEOPLE.

PRIVATISATION WOULD ALSO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-SUFFICIENT BUMIPUTERA INDUSTRIALISTS OR THOSE IN JOINT VENTURES, WHETHER LOCAL OR OVERSEAS, TO FULFIL THE NEP OBJECTIVES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID EMPLOYEES IN PRIVATISED SERVICES WOULD BENEFIT INDIRECTLY FROM BIGGER GOVERNMENT FUNDS.

PRIVATISATION WAS PROPOSED AT THIS STAGE BECAUSE THERE WERE NOW ENOUGH BUMIPUTERA BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS FOR THE CONCEPT TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITHOUT AFFECTING THE NEP.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS HAPPY TO NOTE THAT, EXCEPT FOR A FEW WHO WERE STILL INFLUENCED BY WESTERN TRADE UNION PHILOSOPHY, THE POLICY WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY ALL INCLUDING THE WORKERS WHO WOULD BE INVOLVED.

IN LINE WITH THAT HE URGED POLITICIANS, ESPECIALLY UMNO MEMBERS, NOT ONLY TO ACCEPT THE CONCEPT BUT TO WORK TOWARDS ITS SUCCESS.

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DATUKSERI DR. MAHATHIR REPEATED HIS CALL TO THE PEOPLE TO ADOPT THE WORK ETHICS OF THE JAPANESE AND THE KOREANS WHO ALWAYS WORKED HARD TO INCREASE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY .

HE REGRETTED THAT THERE WERE STILL MANY WHO PRACTISED WESTERN WORK ETHICS WHICH WERE NURTURED BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONS WHEN THE WESTERN NATIONS THEMSELVES HAD DISCARDED THE OLD PHILOSOPHY FOR WORK ETHICS FROM THE EAST.

HE SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO EUROPE AND AMERICA EARLY THIS YEAR, HE FELT A NEW SPIRIT PERVADE THE TWO CONTINENTS AND THE WORKERS THERE NO LONGER FANTASISED LIKE THEY USED TO.

FOR INSTANCE IN BRITAIN NOW THE WORKERS DID NOT SIMPLY HOLD STRIKES BUT INSTEAD REJECTED THEIR LEADERS' ORDERS TO STRIKE.

IN HOLLAND THE GOVERNMENT CUT THE WAGES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS BY THREE PER CENT AND IN AMERICA JAPANESE WORK ETHICS WERE FOLLOWED AND GIANT TRADE UNIONS HAD LOST MANY MEMBERS, HE ADDED,

HE SAID IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE WEST HAD REALISED THAT WORKERS HAD TO WORK HARD TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVING STANDARDS, NOT THREATEN INDUSTRIAL HARMONY.

-- MORE 1135/LK

ZCZC N034

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TOUCHING ON IN-HOUSE UNIONS, HE SAID THIS WAS ONE OF THE STEPS TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL PEACE AND TO GIVE A CHANCE TO SMALL OR NEW INDUSTRIES.

THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGED THE SETTING-UP OF IN-HOUSE UNIONS WHICH LIMITED MEMBERSHIP TO EMPLOYEES AT ALL LEVELS IN A COMPANY SO THAT ANY CLAIMS MADE WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ABILITY OF THE COMPANY TO PAY.

THIS WAS BECAUSE NOT ALL COMPANIES OR INDUSTRIES COULD AFFORD THE WAGES PAID BY THE BIG COMPANIES AND IF HIGH WAGES AND EXCELLENT FACILITIES WERE EXPECTED FROM ALL FIRMS, THEN NEW BUSINESSES COULD NOT START ON A SMALL SCALE.

MANY BUSINESS COMPANIES FELL UNDER THIS CATEGORY, HE ADDED.

HE SAID THAT ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE WORKERS WERE REPRESENTED BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONS, THEN THESE UNIONS, TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THEIR MEMBERS WHO WORKED IN ADVANCED COMPANIES, WOULD NOT ALLOW LOW WAGES TO BE PAID BY THE WEAKER COMPANIES.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO BAD INTENTION IN PROMOTING IN-HOUSE UNIONS. THE MOVE WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE WORKERS GOT WHAT THEY DESERVED WITHOUT AFFECTING THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

-- BERNAMA 1139/LK