

MAHATHIR - COOPERATION

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT. 2 (BERNAMA) - THE GOVERNMENT WILL ONLY CONSIDER JOINT-VENTURES WHERE THE BUMIPUTERA PARTNER IS JUDGED AS CAPABLE OF PLAYING HIS ROLE ACTIVELY? DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT- THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DO THAT EVEN IF THERE ACCUSATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS HELPING +THOSE WHO ALREADY CAPABLE OF STANDING ON THEIR OWN FEET+.

OPENING THE 38TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATED CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF MALAYSIA (ACCCIM) HERE, HE SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND THAT SOME PEOPLE WERE OFFERING ONE OR TWO MILLION RINGGITS TO OBVIOUSLY UNSUITABLE PEOPLE AS PARTNERS.

A LOT OF PEOPLE, HE ADDED, HAD BEEN GOING TO HIS CONSTITUENCY TO SEEK OUT PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE CLOSE TO HIM TO OFFER PARTNERSHIPS IN RETURN FOR INFLUENCE.

+I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THIS IS THE SUREST WAY OF NOT GETTING WHAT YOU WANT+, HE SAID.-- MORE

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR URGED THE ACCCIM AND THE MALAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY TO SHOW A HIGHER LEVEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THEM.

ALTHOUGH HE WAS GLAD THAT THE ACCCIM HAD TAKEN HIS PREVIOUS ADVICE SERIOUSLY, HE SAID THAT SO FAR NOTHING CONCRETE HAD REALLY EMERGED FROM THEIR COOPERATION AND THERE WAS STILL A GREAT DEAL OF SUSPICION BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS.

+BOTH ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD SHOW THEIR SINCERITY AND NOT REGARD COOPERATION AS A LEVER TO OBTAIN CONCESSIONS OR OTHER FACILITIES FROM THE GOVERNMENT+, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER STRESSED THAT SINO-MALAY COOPERATION IN BUSINESS WAS ESSENTIAL FOR ACHIEVING THE TARGETS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY.

THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, COULD NOT FOREVER BE BUYING COMPANIES IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE THE NECESSARY SHARES FOR BUMIPUTERAS.

+BESIDES, IF THE GOVERNMENT DOES THAT, YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF IN COMPETITION WITH GOVERNMENT-OWNED COMPANIES, AND THAT IS NOT HEALTHY FOR YOU+, HE SAID.-- MORE

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HE SAID THAT IT WAS FAR BETTER THAT THE- ACQUISITION OR THE SETTING UP OF NEW COMPANIES BE JOINT VENTURES BETWEEN BUMIPUTERAS AND NON-BUMIPUTERAS SO THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR COULD BE MINIMIZED;

HOWEVER, HE SAID, COOPERATION BETWEEN THEM IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MUST BE GENUINE, WHERE THE BUMIPUTERAS SHOULD NOT EXPECT FREE SHARES OR SINECURE JOBS AS A RESULT OF SUCH JOINT VENTURES.

THEY SHOULD PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY AND TRY UPGRADE THEIR SKILLS THROUGH LEARNING FROM THEIR PARTNERS,

THE NON-BUMIPUTERAS, ON THE OTHER HAND, MUST NOT TEMPT THEIR BUMIPUTERA PARTNERS INTO +LENDING+ THEIR NAMES FOR FREE, HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT BUMIPUTERAS WITHOUT CAPABILITY IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY SHOULD SPEND TIME TO UPGRADE THEIR CAPABILITY EITHER THROUGH ACADEMIC CHANNELS, LIKE TAKING MANAGEMENT COURSES, OR THROUGH INVOLVEMENT DIRECTLY AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL IN ORDER TO GAIN EXPERIENCE.

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DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ASKED THE CHAMBER'S MEMBERS TO AVOID PEOPLE WHO CLAIMED THAT THEY KNEW SO-AND-SO WHO COULD GIVE THE NECESSARY APPROVAL, IF THEY WANTED TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT ACHIEVE THE NEP TARGETS.

HE ALSO REMINDED THE ACCCIM THAT SINCE THE CHINESE COMMUNITY ALREADY HAD THEIR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, THE CHAMBER SHOULD THEREFORE FOCUS ON COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AS MALAYSIANS OF CHINESE ORIGIN.

WITH ITS CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE AT PRESENT, HE SAID, ITS LEADERS MIGHT BE CALLED UPON TO HELP OVERCOME VARIOUS PROBLEMS OF A NON-COMMERCIAL NATURE AND THEY SHOULD RESPOND TO THIS BUT THEY SHOULD NOT DRAG THE CHAMBER IN.

ON PRIVATIZATION, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HOPED THE CHAMBER'S NEWLY-FORMED INVESTMENT COMPANY, UNXCO HOLDINGS, WOULD LOOK INTO ITS ROLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRIVATIZATION OF SOME OF THE BIGGEST GOVERNMENT SERVICES SUCH AS THE RAILWAY, TELECOMS AND AIRLINE.

THE COMPANY, HE SAID, SHOULD GO INTO JOINT VENTURES WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES SO AS TO FUNCTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS MALAYSIAN IDENTITY. -- BERNAMA