

# MALAYS MUST PLAY THEIR PART: DR M

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KUALA LUMPUR Sun. — The Government will only recognise Sino-Malay joint-ventures where the bumiputra partners are judged as capable of playing their role actively, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He added that consideration would be confined to such partnerships even in cases where the Government might be accused of helping those who were already capable of helping themselves.

Dr Mahathir advised those who lacked capability to take up management courses to upgrade their skills or gain experience through direct involvement at an appropriate level.

"The Government is not going to preside over the distribution of money to anyone who thinks he should have his turn irrespective of his capability or sincerity," he said at the opening of the 38th AGM of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia here.

He also said that it was

only through such genuine Sino-Malay co-operation that Government involvement in business would be minimised and the targets of the New Economic Policy be achieved.

However, he added that both sides must be sincere in working together and not regard co-operation as a lever to obtain concessions or other facilities from the Government.

"The Government cannot be forever buying companies in order to acquire the necessary shares for bumiputras.

"Besides, if the Government does that, you (the non-bumiputras) will find yourself in competition with Government-owned companies and that is not healthy for you," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that it would be "far better that the acquisition or the setting up of new companies be joint-ventures between bumiputras and non-bumiputras so that Government involvement can be minimised."

He advised bumiputras "not to expect free shares

or sinecure jobs as a result of such joint-ventures."

"They should participate actively and try to upgrade their skills through learning from their partners."

On the other hand, non-bumiputras must not tempt their bumiputra partners into lending their names for a fee, Dr Mahathir said.

"I have found some people offering \$1 million to \$2 million to obviously unsuitable people as partners."

"A lot of people go to my constituency (Kubang Pasu in Kedah) to seek out people who may be close to me 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.

He advised members of the ACCCIM interested in helping the Government achieve the NEP targets to "please avoid the people who claim that they know so-and-so who can give the necessary approvals."

On the privatisation programme, Dr Mahathir said that the Government had identified several areas but would also examine any

proposal made from other quarters.

He added that certain guidelines had been drawn up and would be available to the private sector soon.

Despite criticisms made, he added that the Government hoped to see a positive reaction from the business community. ...

"We have no illusion about profit being your main objective. We think you should make a profit when you take over Government agencies."

"But it is important that your quest for profit from privatisation should not be at the expense of the employees," he added.

Since the Chinese business community was in control of, or accessible to large amounts of capital, Dr Mahathir said the Government hoped members of the ACCCIM would respond well as privatisation would need such capital.

He added: "You can now prove that you can be more efficient than the Government. There is no doubt that

the whole nation will benefit from your management skills."

With the advent of privatisation, Dr Mahathir also urged businessmen to learn to work together while holding minority shares.

This was because some of the services to be privatised were very big and no single person or company could take them on alone, he said.

Instead, it would require really big companies to take over some of the huge government agencies.

"The idea that a company can only succeed if someone holds the controlling shares of 51 per cent must be banished.

"It is grossly unfair for anyone holding 49 per cent to have no say in a company especially when the paid-up capital runs into millions," he said.

He added that only when Malaysians accepted that companies could be run effectively while having only minority shareholders that "really big companies" could be built.