

KUAH, NOV. 22 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, HERE ON A TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT, TODAY HELD A CLOSED-DOOR MEETING WITH PROMET'S TOP OFFICIALS ON THE PROGRESS OF THE CONGLOMERATE'S \$3 BILLION RESORT PROJECT NOW BEING DEVELOPED IN TANJUNGRHU, 20 KM FROM HERE.

THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING, HELD ON BOARD THE +ASEAN LADY+ -- 4 LUXURY CRUISE BOAT -- WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY MADE KNOWN BUT IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT IT TOUCHED ON PROPOSED INCENTIVES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT.

PROMET, IN A BID TO ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTORS TO INVEST IN THE PROJECT, HAS ASKED FOR SPECIAL FISCAL AND GOVERNMENTAL INCENTIVES INCLUDING THE RELAXING OF THE FOREIGN EQUITY OWNERSHIP OUTLINED IN THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY. THE PROPOSAL WERE CONTAINED IN 4 50-REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT RECENTLY.

PROMET CHAIRMAN TAN SRI IBRAHIM MOHAMMAD, WHEN APPROACHED BY REPORTERS, ADMITTED THAT THE MATTER WAS RAISED DURING THE ONE-HOUR MEETING.

HE, HOWEVER, DECLINED TO COMMENT FURTHER ON THE MATTER, EXCEPT SAYING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD GIVEN HIS ASSURANCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STUDY THE PROPOSAL.

PROMET, JOINTLY DEVELOPING THE MAMMOTH PROJECT WITH 10 OTHER FOREIGN AND LOCAL INVESTORS, HAD ALSO ASKED FOR PIONEER STATUS FOR ITS TOURIST-ATTRACTION PROJECTS, AND TO MAKE LANGKAWI 4 TAX HAVEN.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, ACCOMPANIED BY KEDAH MENTERI BESAR DATUK SERI SYED NAHAR SHAH ABUDDIN AND SENIOR STATE OFFICIALS, WAS EARLIER TAKEN ON A TOUR OF THE PROJECT SITE, COVERING AN AREA OF 1,414 HECTARES.

WORK ON THE PROJECT, UNDERTAKEN BY PROMET'S WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY, PROMET (LANGKAWI) RESORTS SDN BHD, STARTED LATE LAST YEAR AND THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 1986. SO FAR, THE COMPANY HAD ALMOST COMPLETED THE GROUND LEVELLING WORK. CONSTRUCTION IS SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE EARLY NEXT YEAR.

THE FIRST PHASE INCLUDED THE CONSTRUCTION OF SEVEN BIG HOTELS, TWO CONDOMINIUMS, AN 4.4-HECTARE POOL WITH WATER-BASED AMUSEMENT FACILITIES AND AN 18-HOLE GOLF COURSE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, DURING THE TOUR, TOLD PROMET OFFICIALS TO KEEP THE GOOD AND HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP, WITH THE LOCAL PEOPLE TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT.

IT IS NO SECRET THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE HERE HAD OPENLY EXPRESSED THEIR DISSATISFACTION OVER THE PROJECT, WHICH THEY CONSIDERED WOULD BENEFIT THE INVESTORS AND FOREIGNERS AND NOT THE LOCAL FOLK.

INFACT, THE PRIME MINISTER, DURING AN UMNO MEETING HERE LAST NIGHT, TOLD PARTY MEMBERS TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO THE PROJECT TO ACHIEVE THE GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE IN DEVELOPING THIS ISLAND INTO AN INTERNATIONAL TOURIST CENTRE.

EARLY TODAY, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, ACCOMPANIED BY TAN SRI IBRAHIM AND PROMET'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DATUK ABDULLAH MOHAMMAD, WENT ON A BRIEF TOUR OF THE SURROUNDING ISLANDS BY BOAT.

HE WILL BE ENTERTAINED TO A DINNER HOSTED BY PROMET TONIGHT. THE PRIME MINISTER WILL LEAVE FOR KUALA LUMPUR TOMORROW MORNING.

MEANWHILE, A PROMET OFFICIAL, WHO DECLINED TO BE NAMED, TOLD BERNAMA THAT THE COMPANY WAS EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF INTRODUCING THE TIME-SHARING CONCEPT FOR ITS HOLIDAY CONDOS.

UNDER THE CONCEPT, WHICH IS BEING POPULARISED BY CERTAIN HOLIDAY RESORTS IN THIS COUNTRY, 4 PERSON WILL PAY ONLY A NOMINAL SUM TO ENABLE HIM TO USE THE CONDO FOR SEVEN DAYS IN 4 YEAR.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE COMPANY WAS NOW NEGOTIATING ON THE POSSIBILITY OF INTRODUCING DIRECT TV TELECAST FACILITY TO THE RESORT.

PROMET HAD EARLIER BEEN APPROACHED BY TWO FRENCH TV COMPANIES WHICH WERE KEEN TO OFFER THE SAME FACILITY.

THE OFFICIAL SAID THE COMPANY HAD YET TO DECIDE ON THE MATTER AS IT WAS STILL LOOKING INTO THE VARIOUS OFFERS. -- BERNAMA