

MAHATHIR - CONTRACTORS (P)

KUALALUMPUR, NOV. 28 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, EXPLAINING THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S LOOK EAST POLICY IS NOT AIMED AT FAVOURING JAPANESE AND SOUTH KOREAN CONTRACTORS, SAID TONIGHT THAT LOCALS, PARTICULARLY BUMIPUTERAS, WILL BE AWARDED CONTRACTS IF THEY COME CLOSE TO MATCHING THEIR OVERSEAS COUNTERPARTS.

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SURELY NOT WANT TO SEE THE OUTFLOW OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE BUT HAD TO ENTERTAIN CONTRACTORS FROM THE TWO COUNTRIES BECAUSE THEIR QUOTATIONS WERE MUCH LOWER, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

LOCAL CONTRACTORS WOULD, HOWEVER, BE GIVEN GREATER CONSIDERATION FOR PROJECTS IF THE COSTS INCURRED, STANDARD OF WORK AND EFFICIENCY WERE CLOSE TO THAT OF THEIR FOREIGN COUNTERPARTS, HE ADDED AT THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER OF THE MALAYSIAN BUILDING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION HERE.

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT LOCAL CONTRACTORS WERE ALREADY SHOWING IMPROVEMENT, HE ASKED THEM TO POOL THEIR RESOURCES SO THAT THEY COULD COMPETE WITH THE FOREIGNERS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID LOCAL CONTRACTORS SHOULD NOT ONLY LOOK AT THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE INFLOX OF CONTRACTORS FROM THE EAST BUT LOOK FURTHER TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH THEY HAD HELPED IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AND NATIONAL ECONOMY. -- MORE  
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MAHATHIR-CONTRACTORS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

+IT IS NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO FINANCE THE FOREIGNERS. IN FACT, THE GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO LOSE A LITTLE IF THE PEOPLE WILL BENEFIT,+ HE SAID.

BUT, HE SAID, THE PEOPLE SHOULD TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THEMSELVES AND NOT POUNCE ON EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PLAME THE GOVERNMENT.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT AT A GLANCE, IT MIGHT LOOK THAT BUMIPUTERAS WERE LOSING OUT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY BUT EVEN IF THIS WAS SO, IT WAS ONLY A TEMPORARY PROCESS.

IT WAS NO DOUBT THAT SOME LOCAL CONTRACTORS HAD SUCCEEDED IN REDUCING COSTS, AND HAVE BEGUN USING NEW TECHNIQUES SO MUCH SO THAT THEY HAD BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE. THIS, HE POINTED OUT, HAD RESULTED IN THEM WINNING MORE CONTRACTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE WANTED TO SEE MORE COOPERATION BETWEEN BUMIPUTERA AND NON-BUMIPUTERA CONTRACTORS FOR THE PROGRESS OF THE BUILDING SECTOR. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-CONTRACTORS 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS TRUE THAT A CONTRACTOR WHO ONLY HAD HIS OWN SELFISH INTERESTS AT HEART WOULD RAKE IN HUGE RETURNS? BUT CAUTIONED THAT THIS WOULD ONLY BE FOR A SHORT TERM.

+IF THIS ATTITUDE CONTINUES, THEN ALL OF US WILL LOSE IN THE LONG TERM,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID BUMIPUTERA CONTRACTORS SHOULD PLAY AN ACTIVE AND MEANINGFUL ROLE IN ALL JOINT VENTURE PROJECTS AND NOT JUST BE THE +CONTACT MAN.+

ON THE OTHER HAND, THOSE WHO RECEIVED CONTRACTS SHOULD NOT SUB CONTRACT ALL THE WORK TO AN EXTENT THAT THEY DID NOT EVEN VISIT THE WORKSITE. -- BERNAMA

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