

Dr M DEFENDS GOVT'S HEAVY INDUSTRY PLAN

S - 2 SEP 1985

SHAH ALAM, Sun. — The country's industrialisation process will not be at the expense of the agricultural sector, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said such opinions, published by newspapers recently, were baseless, often incorrect and should not be entertained by sensible people.

"The country's economic planners are knowledgeable and very experienced," he said when opening Edaran Otomobil Nasional Sdn Bhd (EON) and its 20 branches which signalled the launching of the sale of *Proton Saga*.

He said the emphasis on heavy industry was an important aspect in the nation's industrialisation strategy.

"There are, however, some critics who think heavy industry means the Heavy Industry Corporation of Malaysia (Hicom) and other big industries.

"They fail to understand that heavy industry includes factories manufacturing cement, paper and steel and plants producing ammonia-urea and petrochemical products," he said. Dr Mahathir said

these critics had also failed to realise that many heavy industry factories had been operating in the country for a long time.

He said the benefits of heavy industry were many, including the usage of local resources in their production.

"It also saves foreign exchange. If capital-intensive goods are not produced locally, we would have to import them," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the process of industrialisation would not be complete without heavy industries.

He said there were numerous opportunities for technology-transfer in heavy industries, especially the iron and engineering industries which could provide the basis for the development of "home-grown technology."

Dr Mahathir said the heavy industry provided a chance for managers and technical officers to administer large industrial companies.

He said skilled management was important not only to the nation's industrialisation but also developing those of other countries.