

# PM: NEP DEVIATIONS CAN BE CORRECTED

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — The Government is prepared to take corrective steps if it can be proven that there are deviations in the implementation of the New Economic Policy, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Referring to a statement by MCA deputy president Datuk Lee Kim Sai yesterday that while the party agreed to the objectives of the NEP, it was concerned over deviations in its implementation, the Prime Minister said:

"I feel such views

should be discussed within the party (Barisan Nasional).

"But if there is proof of such deviations, we are ready to take remedial action, he added."

Dr Mahathir also said that Barisan component parties could air their views on the NEP through their representatives in the Cabinet.

Asked if the Barisan would set up a panel similar to that of Umno's to discuss the effects of the NEP and what changes were necessary for better implementation, Dr Mahathir said:

"The first stage is for us to know what Umno wants and this will be done through the Umno panel which comprises businessmen and others."

Dr Mahathir added that politicians alone could not make an assessment of the NEP "just like other parties which only discuss the NEP among their own members."

He was speaking at a Press conference after opening a two-day seminar for MPs at the Putra World Trade Centre.

In welcoming Dr Mahathir's statement, MCA president Datuk Dr Ling

Liong Sik said the party was prepared to identify areas where it believed there had been deviations of the policy.

"We will bring all these up for discussion within the Barisan Nasional forum with a view to seek solutions," he added.

Dr Ling, who is also Transport Minister, described Dr Mahathir's assurance as "reflective of his very honest intention to truly mould a united Malaysian country."

"I think we have to work together to make a success of the country especially in this troubled

time and the deepening recession," he added.

Dr Mahathir, in his Press conference, also said that the seminar was to inform MPs on policies such as Look East, heavy industries, the NEP, assimilation of Islamic values and agriculture.

"This is to ensure MPs are more effective when it comes to explaining Government policies. At present, policies are open to individual interpretation.

"We realise some interpretations are not right and have to be corrected,"

he said.

He added that through the seminar, the Government hoped MPs would be able to take part in debates in Parliament because of a better understanding of policies.

"At present, some MPs find it difficult to take part in Parliamentary debates because of a lack of knowledge on policies," he said.

Dr Mahathir said similar seminars will be conducted at State level.

"Maybe this seminar is not enough. We may have to have other such seminars," he added.