

BE MORE HELPFUL, BANKS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged financial institutions today to be more sympathetic to the problems of bumiputra entrepreneurs.

They should help the businessmen where possible, the Prime Minister said.

At the same time, he said, bumiputra businessmen must change their attitudes and not rely too much on the Government.

"They should also tighten up financial discipline," he added.

Dr Mahathir was speaking after a dialogue with bumiputra businessmen at Bank Negara.

The dialogue was a follow-up of Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin's statement that Bank Negara would look into the problems faced by bumiputra businessmen.

At the dialogue, the Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry proposed that there should be a moratorium of two years on loan repayments.

It also suggested the creation of a special revolving fund to help bumiputra businessmen and companies.

Dr Mahathir said the Government

would look into their proposals, including the programme and procedures to help the businessmen repay their loans owing to the recession.

He said the procedures for the special rehabilitation unit must be established and that there should be more training of credit officers and staff engaged in reviewing the problems of bumiputra businessmen.

The dialogue also discussed the review of the proposed legislation on Chapter 11, the creation of a second board for bumiputra businessmen on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange, and the review of tender procedures

to speed up payments for bumiputra businessmen.

Present at the dialogue were Encik Daim, Trade and Industry Minister Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz, Deputy Finance Minister Senator Mohamed Farid Ariffin and Bank Negara Governor Datuk Jaffar Hussein.

Representatives from various Ministries and government agencies, Mara, Bank Pembangunan, the Credit Guarantee Corporation, Bank Rakyat, the Association of Banks in Malaysia and the Association of Merchant Banks in Malaysia also attended the dialogue.