

Post-NEP plan to be drawn up by Government

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THE Government will formulate its own national economic policy to replace the New Economic Policy which expires at the end of this year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He told the Dewan Rakyat yesterday that the Government was forced to rely on its own resources after the withdrawal of several members from the National Economic Consultative Council (NECC).

"The NECC recommendations did not represent a consensus because of the withdrawals. However, the Government will study the report submitted by the remainder of the NECC members for ideas which could be acceptable to the Government," he said in response to a supplementary question from Haji Ibrahim Ali (S46-Pasir Mas).

In answering the original question from Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Kota Melaka), Dr Mahathir said the Government was no longer obliged to accept in full the recommendations which were not arrived at by consensus.

Several members of the NECC withdrew from the council and had been criticising recommendations which were agreed upon by the remaining members of the council.

This showed that:

- the critics of the NEP were themselves not capable of creating a better economic policy and could only criticise;

- the policy formulated by those left in the NECC would not be an ideal one and acceptable to Malaysia's multi-racial society; and,

- the economic policy which was formulated by those still on the NECC might not be better than any policy formulated by the Government.

Dr Mahathir said it was unfortunate that the NECC could not reach a consensus because the council was set up to take into account views from all groups on the national economic policy for the years after 1990.

To another supplementary question from Ahmad Nor (S46-Bayan Baru), who wanted to know whether the Government realised that the Opposition was not opposed to the policies contained in the NEP but was unable to accept the implementation of the policies, Dr Mahathir said:

"It is just a tactic of the Opposition to accept a policy but oppose its implementation methods, whereas if one were to accept a policy, one also has to accept its implementation."