

Mara under fire over loans

NSunT 30 DEC 1990

★ FROM PAGE ONE

tera businessmen in future to prevent the recurrence of similar problems.

"It will also award contracts or issue licences or other assistance only to those Bumiputera businessmen who can handle them."

Dr Mahathir stressed that the Government would continue to pursue its objective to raise the Bumiputeras' share in the national economy.

He urged Bumiputera businessmen to learn from their follies and improve their management skills.

"The Government has noted that some Bumiputera businessmen are weak in management and untrustworthy.

"An example of untrustworthiness is the practice of some Bumiputeras selling their names to enable others to subscribe to shares of companies."

Dr Mahathir said that this was a serious weakness which should be overcome if they hoped to succeed in business.

On their management weaknesses, he said many had squandered their funds, resulting in the failure of their businesses.

He also criticised Mara for not collecting the money given out as loans to Bumiputeras as it encouraged them not to settle their loans.

Dr Mahathir said that if Bumiputeras had fully used the aid given to them, they would have achieved more than the 30 per cent target of the New Economic Policy.

He said they had so far achieved only 20 per cent.

Earlier, chamber president Dr Nawawi Mat Awin said the Malaysian economy would be brighter if not for the Gulf crisis.

He urged Asean countries to support the call by Dr Mahathir to form a trading block which could become a base for them to negotiate with other economic groupings such as the European Economic Community and the proposed group involving the United States and other nations on the American continent.

Only able Bumiputeras to get large contracts

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ALOR STAR, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the Government will from now on study the capabilities of Bumiputera businessmen before awarding large contracts or issuing permits to them as many have failed to manage their businesses well.

Some had even shown that they were untrustworthy, he said at the

opening of the Malaysian Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry annual general meeting held at the Muda Agricultural Development Authority (Mada) complex.

He said that in the past the Government had awarded large contracts and issued many licences and given other aid to enable Bumiputera businessmen to carry out their bu-

sinesses on a large scale but many had failed due to poor management.

Others had indulged in Ali Baba and similar activities, jeopardising the Government's intention to boost their business activities, he said.

"The Government will provide management and other courses for Bumipu-

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COL 7