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Mahathir-industries,

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the time has come for Malaysia to import raw materials for processing and export on a large scale.

The Prime Minister said the government would encourage such industries although it would continue to promote resource-based industries.

Apart from this, the government would continue to place emphasis on heavy industries as they were essential for attaining the status of an industrialised country, he added when tabling the motion on the Sixth Malaysia Plan (SMP) in the Dewan Rakyat.

He said the emphasis in the Sixth Plan was to promote new areas of growth so as to strengthen and diversify the industrial base.

In view of labour shortages, the government would encourage the establishment of more capital intensive and technologically sophisticated industries while maintaining the importance of traditional industries such as electronics, apparel and textile. -- more

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The Prime Minister said the capabilities of the small and medium-scale industries (SMIs) would be improved to enable them to supply the required production inputs for larger enterprises and to penetrate export markets.

The government has also undertaken the development of special industrial sites to relocate SMIs, in particular the foundry and engineering and timber-based industries.

The government was undertaking a special study with a view to formulating a comprehensive programme for the development of SMIs in order to enhance their role in the economy, he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said domestic tourism would be promoted to reduce the outflow of funds.

A national tourism plan which is being prepared would provide the guidelines for the expansion of the tourism industry, he added. -- Bernama

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