

Go for corporate marriages, PM tells firms

By Foong Pek Yee

PETALING JAYA, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today corporate marriages must be an example to be followed by companies in meeting the challenges of the 90s.

Dr Mahathir said this was part of the globalisation strategy and increasingly practised by multinational companies now.

He cited the "corporate marriage" between JVC Japan and Philips to produce video cassette recorders and printed circuit board assemblies for export as a fine example.

The decision to locate this project in Shah Alam also reflected their confidence in Malaysia, Dr Ma-

hathir said when launching the Philips Centennial Celebrations here today.

He said the Government would continue to support technology projects which not only produced high quality products but also helped upgrade local technical expertise.

The Prime Minister reiterated that the manufacturing sector would continue to play a more important role in Malaysia's development in the next decade.

He said only industrialisation would enable a country to reach a developed status and the Government would continue to make all efforts to ensure a good investment climate.

This would include tax incentives and skilled labour supply to ensure the successful implementation of all programmes, strategies and policies, he said.

"Pragmatic and flexible policies together with our political stability and good future has made the country an attraction for local and foreign investors.

"The success of established companies like Philips in Malaysia for instance is testimony to our country's success," Dr Mahathir said.

Another example of the country's excellent economic performance, he said, was the proposed investment of 245 electronics projects worth more than \$4.5 billion last year.

This is in contrast to only 38 projects worth \$117.5 million in 1986.

He said the electronics industries produced \$20.3 billion worth of products last year, making it as one of the important sub-sectors in the manufacturing sector.

To further promote the good investment climate, Dr Mahathir said the Government had under the Sixth Malaysia Plan set aside \$10.8 billion or 19.6 per cent of its allocation for the transport and communication sectors.

Meanwhile, he added, another \$20 billion would be spent by Tenaga Nasional Berhad and Telekom Malaysia to upgrade their facilities.

Malaysia is also one of the countries in the world with the most open economy, he said.

Dr Mahathir said, such characteristics had brought about greater integration of the Malaysian economy with that of other countries and thus speed up the nation's economic development.

To mark the occasion, the Philips Group of companies in Malaysia gave \$90,000 to the Malayan Nature Society to establish a network of nature clubs in schools throughout the country.

Twelve schools in Selangor and the Federal Territory were selected for the project co-ordinated by the society and co-operation from the Education Ministry.