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DON'T BE DUMPING GROUND, PMS TELLS CONSUMERS

Mahathir-consumers

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 15 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today advised local consumers to be wary of being made a target of dangerous goods that developed countries are dumping in developing nations.

He said that some goods, including medicine, whose quality was inferior and which had been rejected by consumers in developed countries were being distributed in developing countries.

+There is this view that dangerous industries should be relocated to developing countries. This was one of the proposals made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently, + he told reporters after launching the World Consumers Day at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

+It is clear that if consumers in developing countries are not careful they will become the target of goods that could not be sold in their countries of origin, + he added.

Dr Mahathir urged consumer bodies to take a serious view of this matter as inferior quality goods may not be easily identified. -- more

15/03/14-43MST

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In his speech, the Prime Minister said in this era of international free trade, consumers should be concerned about the practice of dumping inferior quality and dangerous goods in developing countries.

Suppliers in developed countries were of the view that consumers in poor countries were not sophisticated and had no choice, he added.

+Because of this, sub-standard or hazardous goods, like machines that break down easily or threaten the environment, or medicine and insecticide that are banned in developed countries, are sent to developing countries, + he said.

He said consumers were now aware that corporate actions could be influenced through buying trend and preference for goods from suppliers that were ethical from the social and environmental aspects.

Consumers were also becoming increasingly aware that their problem was not restricted to the local market and could not be overcome through localised action, he said. -- more

15/03/14-47MST

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+Concentration of efforts at the national and international levels is important to ensure their effects would benefit all consumers,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir said consumers realised that they should counter modern marketing practices and methods which were getting more complex and confusing as well as be wary of technological developments that endangered life and the ecology.

With the growth of the consumer movement, entrepreneurs should always adhere to the concept of fair price and give priority to ensuring the standards of their goods in line with the modern marketing concept that consumers be regarded as +king+.

This concept had been practised by export-oriented manufacturers in Malaysia but certain goods produced for local consumption were found to be wanting in terms of originality and quality while after-sales service was unsatisfactory, he added.

+Just like we expect all services and goods we use to be of quality, we should ensure our services and goods are of quality when we become suppliers.

+We will have no credibility if we insist on quality for ourselves but not for others who are directly or indirectly our customers,+ he added. -- more

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Dr Mahathir also said the government found that some leaders of local consumer associations were receiving help from other countries to run down their own country by doing work not connected to consumerism.

One consumer association had gone to Langkawi to obstruct development by claiming that development could spoil the environment, he added.

Dr Mahathir said what the consumer association wanted was for the Langkawi people to hold to ransom those who wished to develop the island.

+This is not a wise move because it has caused the cost of living to rise as problem which has no place in development has been created...and to solve it money has to be spent,+ he said.

Leaders who made use of associations for other purposes should be removed, he said, adding that consumer bodies attracted the attention of politicians and foreigners because they were influential.

The Prime Minister said consumers also had a role to play to check inflation because the government's anti-inflation efforts would fail if the people were spendthrift. -- more

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What was worse was spending beyond ones means, for example through easy credit, he said.

He said part of the increase in income should be saved and if consumers were always mindful of the effects of uncontrolled buying on inflation, there will be no price increases.

At the ceremony, Dr Mahathir presented the +Tokoh Kepenggunaan 1991+ awards to Pahang Association of Consumers President Bishan Singh and Kelantan Consumer Association President Haji Yusof Ahmad. Each of them received \$1,000, a medal and certificate of appreciation.

Dr Mahathir also presented \$3,000 and a certificate of appreciation to the Pahang Association of Consumers for excellence in its work.

He also presented letters of appointment to the chairmen of the state consumer affairs councils.

Dr Mahathir earlier watched a sketch on consumerism featuring actors of the television comedy series +Pi Mai Pi Mai Tang Tu+.

Present were Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar and his deputy, Datuk Kadir Sheikh Fadzir. -- Bernama