

# PM: DON'T CHEAT

By V.K. CHIN

**HO CHI MINH CITY: The Government will deal firmly with Malaysian businessmen who resort to cheating when operating in Vietnam.**

**They will get no protection from the Government but will be sent back to Vietnam to face the consequences of their unethical actions.**

The blunt warning came from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is leading a 200-strong delegation on a five-day official visit to Vietnam.

The Prime Minister, who arrived here on Sunday, leaves for home today. He spent three days in Hanoi where he had discussions with Vietnamese leaders and the private sector. He arrived in Ho Chi Minh City on Wednesday for further discussions with senior officials and the private sector.

Speaking to Malaysian editors accompanying him on the visit, Dr Mahathir said the businessmen had been told at a briefing before their departure that they should not venture into Vietnam just to make a fast buck.

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"We told them the Vietnamese value our friendship and have such a high regard for us that they would like to use us as a model for their development," he said.

"So they should not try to do things in Vietnam which will spoil this image. The businessmen should regard their investment here as long-term rather than temporary.

"If anybody is found cheating here and if they should return to Malaysia they will be sent back to Vietnam to face the consequences. We will not protect such people."

On his visit, the Prime Minister said it was a success and had achieved its objectives. It had enhanced relations between the Government and the private sector.

The leaders discussed the role of Malaysia and how Kuala Lumpur could help to develop Vietnam's economy and identified also the role of the private sector.

"On the government side, we have identified training programmes for the Vietnamese and the private sector has started a few joint venture projects with

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Vietnamese agencies and businessmen," he said.

"Our problem is that we are always late and our businessmen have **always** waited for the Government to take the lead. Some of our products are being sold here by third parties."

Dr Mahathir said the businessmen must change their attitude and venture on their own

However, he noticed this was changing as some Malaysians had gone to Angola where no government mission had been before.

He said after this, perhaps the businessmen would be more aggressive in finding new markets for **themselves** abroad.

On his discussions with Vietnamese leaders, he said they admitted the Soviet system adopted by them had failed and so

they had to change to the free-market economy.

They further admitted they had no experience, entrepreneurship and management but they **would try** to upgrade their skills in these areas.

On the East Asian Economic Caucus, Dr Mahathir said this was discussed and the Vietnamese supported it. However, they were anxious to join **Asean** first.