

PM: Accept bumi entrepreneurs

By ROHAIZAD A. RAHIM

KUALA LUMPUR: Reluctance by society to accept bumiputra entrepreneurs appears to be the main problem that hinders their development, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said the situation often forced bumiputra entrepreneurs to depend on certain special privileges and government contracts to survive.

"When there are contracts to be awarded, everybody, including bumiputras, seem to steer clear from these entrepreneurs as they still have doubt over their capabilities," he said.

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Dr Mahathir was speaking at the launching of Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Bhd (PUNB) yesterday (see Star Business).

Present were Perbadanan Nasional Bhd chairman Tun Ismail Ali, Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat and Law Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar.

Dr Mahathir said bumiputra entrepreneurs' capabilities were similar to those of the other races.

He also said that on such matter the public feeling was that it was the Government's responsibility to provide quotas for bumiputra entrepreneurs to ensure their suc-

cess.

"This is not only a negative approach but an insulting one," he added.

"At times, the capital and opportunities are there but there are other factors which caused them to fail. This is what we must find out," he said.

Dr Mahathir also rapped entrepreneurs out to make a fast buck, saying that such approach would only lead to failures.

He said certain impatient entrepreneurs resorted to selling their contracts, share allocations and licences for instant profit.

"These are the people who should not be in business," Dr Mahathir

said.

"Their get-rich-quick attitude will only prevent them from getting their rightful share of the nation's economy.

"Anyway, those who get rich quick will also get poor quick as they have shown their inability to manage their own businesses."

He said businesses should be allowed to flourish at their own pace and entrepreneur should make sure that they had adequate financial reserves in the event of a crisis or for expansion purposes.

Dr Mahathir also outlined certain virtues which should be instilled among bumiputra entrepreneurs in order to progress.

He said they should uphold good values like honesty and responsibility as these would enable them to secure credit, contracts and supplies.

"No amount of training given to them will achieve results if emphasis is not given to such values," he added.

"It must be borne in mind that if a bumiputra commits an irresponsible or dishonest act, the effect will be felt by the entire bumiputra community," he said.

Dr Mahathir also advised those selected for the PUNB programme to realise that this was only a small step towards success.