

# PM: Perks alone don't breed success

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By Manan Osman

KLJALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Bumiputera contractors can only be considered successful when they can compete with other contractors in the "private sector arena", Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said as long as they had to be dependent on government privileges for contracts they could not be considered successful even though they could undertake contracts worth millions of ringgit.

He said, however, government privileges could not be given forever. There was a limit to everything.

But the Government could not withdraw (the privileges) just yet because they might not succeed, he said at the opening of a special course for Bumiputera building contractors at the Public Works Malaysia Institute in Bangi near here.

Also present were Deputy Works Minister Kerk Choo Ting; Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid; and Public Works director-general Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Yaacob.

When replying to a question by reporters later, Dr Mahathir said although there was no tie frame for the removal of the privileges, the contractors themselves should realise that after 35 years of independence and government assistance, they could not depend on the Government much longer.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir likened the contractors as patients in hospitals and said if they could not walk, the doctors could give them the crutches to assist them to walk but they would be advised to exercise to get rid of the crutches as soon as possible.

Dr Mahathir said he did not see why Bumiputera contractors could not compete with the others when Bumiputera architects and engineers did not have to depend on the Government.

He also stressed on the need to find out the reasons why Bumiputera contractors could not be as successful as other contractors.

"It is important that a study be made to find out about this," he said.

"We have to identify the 'disease' so that remedial ac-

tion can be taken."

He said Bumiputera contractors also should not be shy to identify their weaknesses and take steps to overcome them.

"They should not blame others but themselves for their failure."

He said there was also a need for contractors to change their work attitude.

"Some contractors, instead of concentrating on the projects they receive, leave it to others to carry out the work for them. Such contractors do not know how to do their work."

He said some contractors in their desire to win contracts, quoted a very low tender price with the hope of getting some money to pay their other debts.

On the course participants, Dr Mahathir said they would be given certain privileges in undertaking Government projects but if they failed to undertake them successfully after one or two times, they could not expect anymore assistance in future.

He said the kind of privileges to be extended to them would be decided by the Public Works Department.