

▼09/10/16-53MST

CNS4696

U GE 09-10 00203 EG527

aae

Rptng, changing +walking stick+ to +crutches+ in fourth, fifth paras.
DISCARD DEPENDENCE ON GOVT, DR M TELLS BUMIPUTERA CONTRACTORS

Mahathir-contractors

bm

BANGI, Oct 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today told Bumiputera building contractors to discard their dependence on the government and to compete in the private sector with determination, honesty and trust.

He expressed disappointment that even 35 years after the 'country became independent, these contractors had yet to show their' capability, and willingness to compete in the private sector.

They could only be considered to have succeeded when they no longer depended on government projects and the privileges accorded to them, and were able to openly 'compete with the other communities, he said in a keynote address opening a special course for Bumiputera building contractors here.

The Prime Minister described a contractor with the' negative attributes as a physically handicapped person who had to depend on crutches to move about.

+The government will not forever provide these crutches because it does not seem to 'be helping them to progress but only to regress,+ he said. -- more

end of rptn

▼09/10/16-18MST

CNS4688

U GE 09-10 00135 EG526

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Mahathir-contractors 2 Bangi

Dr Mahathir said Bumiputera building contractors should not be ashamed of finding out why they did not progress and then seek ways to rectify the situation.

He said the two-week course was an effort to overcome the weaknesses of the contractors.

Dr Mahathir advised them to put into practice all the knowledge and experience gained from the course if they were wanted to be 'successful contractors.

He said he was convinced that Bumiputera building contractors could be as successful as those of the other communities because they were not physically handicapped in any way.

+It is important that we must be prepared to work with determination and must not' be too dependent on government assistance,+ he said. -- more

▼09/10/16-13MST

CNS4720

U GE 09-10 00163 EG528

aae

Mahathir-contractors 3 Bangi

+I am embarrassed to 'see Bumiputera building contractors waiting for government project tenders and after they get the tenders, asking for the privilege to obtain an advance payment of 15 per cent of the project cost to obtain supplies to start the project,+ he said.

He said that in any business, the businessman must have at least some capital to begin a project.

He also said that Bumiputera building contractors must be honest, sincere and trustworthy, and should always settle their debt even if they suffered losses.

+The integrity of Bumiputeras as a whole will be tarnished by a few who fail to keep to their pledge to settle their debts,+ he added.

Dr Mahathir reminded the 40 course participants not to think that their participation was solely for the sake of getting certificates which offered privileges for them to get projects in the future. -- more

▼09/10/16-40MST

CNS4740

U GE 09-10 00246 EG529

aae

Mahathir-contractors (last) 4 Kuala Lumpur

Speaking to reporters later, Dr Mahathir said most importantly the course would educate the participants to be successful and prepare them to compete in the private sector.

Asked whether the government proposed to set a time frame to withdraw assistance and privileges to Bumiputera building contractors, he said there was no such plan yet. He added however that the assistance and privileges would not go on forever.

+We cannot withdraw these at once, or the Bumiputera building contractors will suffer,+ he said.

The Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, who is chairman of the National Committee on Development, said in his speech that the course was aimed at, among other things, providing an in-depth understanding of the ethics of business, and property management to building contractors with potential.

The course, a brainchild of Dr Mahathir, was a training programme which focused on strengthening the capability of Bumiputeras in managing, operating and evaluating their business effectively through new methods.

The course, in the form of lectures and open discussions, is organised by the National Committee on Development. From next year, it would be held in two parts, for the small contractors of Class +F+ to +D+ and the big contractors of Class +C+ to +A+, and would be handled by the Works Ministry under the same format as the inaugural course. -- Bernama'

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