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MAHATHIR CALLS FOR INTEGRATION OF BUMI, NON-BUMI ECONOMIES

Congress - Mahathir, 0 JAN 1992

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called for the integration of the Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera economies, saying that Malaysia cannot have two economies.

Opening the third Bumiputera Economic Congress here, the Prime Minister said both Bumiputeras and non-Bumiputeras should exercise more tolerance for each other for a meaningful partnership and to learn from each other.

This cooperation would be useful not only for efforts to achieve the objectives of the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the National Development Policy (NDP) but also for politics and the nation, he said.

+The fact is, we cannot have two separate economies in our country. Therefore, the Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera economies must be integrated to alleviate any envy on either side,+ he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said such cooperation could only be forged by fostering tolerance and forbearance to ensure that both parties had a place in the national economy. -- more

▼10/01/11-28MST

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Congress - Mahathir 2 Kuala Lumpur

Non-Bumiputeras are taking part in the congress for the first time. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said their participation was important because they had a role to play in the implementation of specific resolutions.

+Perhaps this is assumed as being too optimistic but we must be optimistic in any programme or approach. It will be impossible to implement programmes successfully without great expectation,+ he said.

He said he hoped that the participation of non-Bumiputeras would enable them to better understand the aspirations of the congress so that they could play a more positive role.

This was because the role of non-Bumiputeras could be vital in determining the success or failure of all programmes to balance the economies of the two groups, he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir cited the approach adopted by non-Bumiputeras as one reason for the failure of the NEP. He said non-Bumiputeras had preferred their Bumiputera partners to be passive, such as not wanting to take business risks and to be inactive in management. -- more

▼10/01/12-09MST

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Congress - Mahathir 3 Kuala Lumpur

+In this way, Bumiputera businessmen will forever remain ignorant and will continue to depend on them (non-Bumiputeras),+ he said.

This might seem to benefit non-Bumiputeras but the attitude would be to their disadvantage because there would then be NEPs forever, he said, adding that it would be more advantageous for them to ensure that Bumiputeras were their partners in the real sense and shared the risks of the business.

The Prime Minister also referred to the difficulty Bumiputera companies faced in expanding their business owing to the resignation of partners or employees to set up their own companies after gaining some experience.

+If the partner or employer is a non-Bumiputera, there is all the more reason to go separate ways. As such, there have been few partnerships between Bumiputeras and non-Bumiputeras which have lasted,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this imposed restrictions on the opportunities for Bumiputeras to learn and added that he wanted the problem to be overcome immediately. -- more

♥10/01/12-29MST

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Congress - Mahathir 4 Kuala Lumpur

Touching on the implementation of the NEP, the Prime Minister said the distribution of wealth in a growing +economic cake+ did not adversely affect the ownership of wealth by other communities and equity control by foreigners in the country.

+In other words, Malaysia has confronted the problem of differences in the economic situation of the communities by formulating policies and programmes which are radical but apt,+ he said, adding that the programmes did not involve confiscation of property like in some other countries.

He expressed regret that critics of the NEP only focused on the equity distribution of large companies without taking into account the educational opportunities, subsidies, loans funds and various industrial incentives to overcome unemployment, provided by the government.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that in undertaking any development programme, the government always emphasised infrastructure development, particularly in the rural areas where much of the population was poor.

This was resorted to in realisation of the fact that efforts to restructure and motivate entrepreneurship development might widen the economic gap among Bumiputeras themselves, he said. --.more

▼10/01/13-34MST

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Congress - Mahathir 5 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the nation had been able to learn much from the efforts to restructure society under the NEP, and added that no other country had made huge financial allocations to eradicate poverty.

Citing the corporate sector as an example, he said Bumiputeras were able to increase their ownership of wealth to 20 per cent in 1990 compared to only two per cent in 1970 (when the NEP was launched), apart from outstanding development in various other sectors.

Furthermore, he said, the increase in the number of Bumiputeras who pursued higher education, particularly from poor families, provide baseless the allegations that the NEP had benefited only the rich or certain families.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir admitted that the objective of the NEP to establish a Bumiputera Commercial and Industrial Community had yet to be achieved, probably because the type of business and industry picked by Bumiputeras were unproductive or weak.

Also, he said, Bumiputeras failed owing to their poor quality output and low competitiveness and not because of constraints resulting from the implementation of the NEP. -- Bernama