

Industrialisation a wise decision: PM

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MALAYSIA'S choice of opting for industrialisation, the core objective of Vision 2020, to achieve developed nation status is a wise one. Similarly, Malaysia's decision to reduce dependence on primary commodities has also paid off.

Had Malaysia still relied on commodities such as tin and rubber, obviously it would not have been able to progress as it has now. Commodities are vulnerable and subject to international market manipulation.

Today, the price of tin is down again (the tin price closed at RM13.07 a kg on the Kuala Lumpur Tin Market yesterday).

"Rubber fared no better either (it closed at 209 sen a kg yesterday). In fact, industrialisation seems to be the only way for a country like Malaysia to get out of commodity markets that are manipulated by countries far away from our shores," Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said the Government's decision to concentrate on industrialisation is a wise move, adding that it is not a wrong decision for the country to focus on Vision 2020. He hastened to add that its success will greatly depend on the close partnership between the public and private sectors as envisaged in the Malaysia Inc concept.

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the launching of a book, *Dealing With The Malaysian Civil Service (MCS)*, and a government circular, *Guidelines on Client's Charter*.

The Prime Minister expressed confidence that with

BENEFITS OF THE CLIENT'S CHARTER

To the public

- (i) It enables the public to know specifically the quality of service to expect from the department/agency;
- (ii) It enables the public to evaluate the performance of the services rendered;
- (iii) It reduces uncertainties over the delivery of services;
- (iv) It facilitates comparisons between agencies which offer similar services; and
- (v) The public will be aware of the quality standards of each department/agency.

To the Government Departments/Agencies

- (i) The Charter will act as a performance indicator and will enable the department/agency to make evaluation; and
- (ii) Discipline, responsibility and accountability in the public service will be upgraded, which in turn will contribute to a more transparent public service.

the forging of a closer private-public sector relationship and with the involvement of all levels of people, Malaysia can achieve developed nation status by the year 2020.

"Having seen how we have worked together since independence, we can achieve this target. Malaysia's economy has been registering an average annual growth of 7 per cent plus since 1957. This is an achievement that we should be proud of," Dr Mahathir said.

At the launching ceremony, which was attended by the nation's top civil servants, including Chief Secre-

tary to the Government Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, the Prime Minister stressed the need for the public and private sectors to avoid a confrontational attitude.

Instead, in the spirit of Malaysia Inc, both should continue to understand each other, in an effort to complement one another to further improve the economy.

The public sector should realise that by becoming efficient and providing good service it is helping the private sector to earn more and move the economy faster. When this happens, the Government will be able to col-

lect more revenue through taxes.

"The public sector should not see profit as the private sector's only priority. If the private sector fails, the Government will collect less taxes and it will be difficult for us to pay the civil servants more," Dr Mahathir said.

In turn, the private sector should discard the view that the public sector is an obstacle to its operations.

When the Malaysia Inc concept was first introduced in the early 1980s, Dr Mahathir said, there were fears that if the public sector gets too close to the private sector there will be malpractice.

However, he said, after taking into account that malpractices can happen at anytime, the Government decided to go ahead with the policy all the same.

Now, he said, the policy is beginning to show success but there is still much to be done by the public and private sectors to ensure its effectiveness.

Malaysia, he said, is very lucky in that it has inherited a good civil service system from the British capable of coping with demands of modern administration.

To improve the functions of the MCS, the Client's Charter — a written commitment made by a government department or agency for its output or services to its customers — was circulated beginning yesterday.

It is also an assurance by government departments and agencies that their services rendered will comply with standards declared as quality standards.

For example, the National Registration Department

will set objectives within its own charter that new identity cards will be ready within three months of the date of receipt of an application.

To ensure credibility of the respective charters, the department or agency concerned has to match the pledges it makes with its capability — which will depend on available resources such as manpower, technology, finance, systems and procedures.

This will help ensure that the stated declarations which are within the department's or agency's capability will be fulfilled at all times. In this respect, Dr Mahathir said, the private sector has stronger grounds for complaints if government departments fail to deliver in keeping with their respective charters.

Dealing With The MCS emphasises the efforts of the civil service to achieve the objectives of the Malaysia Inc policy. The book is divided into three parts — a profile of ministries and departments, licensing requirements for businesses and incentives for investment, and a directory of trade and industry associations.

It will serve as a useful guide both to the business community and the public in explaining the functions and procedures to obtain licences, permits and approvals from the various ministries concerned.

Dr Mahathir said the private sector can assist the public sector by going through the book and understanding the various procedures. This can help speed up the processing of various applications.