

PM: Vast power saving opportunities

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The opportunities for energy saving, especially in the industrial sector, are enormous and studies by the Government revealed they could be between 20 and 52 per cent.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the largest savings in power could be realised in the food processing sector followed by wood and textile industries.

"If these industries are more energy efficient, their profits would also increase," he said during the launch of the 100-year anniversary celebrations of electricity in the country at the Putra World Trade Centre.

His speech was read by Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu.

The Prime Minister said through savings in power,

production costs could be reduced which would help boost the competitiveness of the country's goods and services.

"At the same time, power generation should be enhanced to help develop the channelling of electricity as well as to boost the manufacturing sector.

"This is why the Government planned to utilise electricity for the rail service."

Dr Mahathir said if the cost of power supply was reduced, the use of electric lights could be increased to make towns and villages brighter.

He added that the per capita use of electricity reflected a country's development and the more efficiently it is used, the greater the development of the country.

He said regulations to ensure the efficient use of energy were necessary and

studies have to be carried out to determine opportunities where savings can be made in other sectors including commercial and residential.

Dr Mahathir said Tenaga Nasional Berhad and government agencies should help increase the efficient use of energy to make the country more productive.

He said oil was the main fuel used to generate electricity but this is expected to decline from the present 54 per cent to three per cent in the year 2000.

"During the period, the contribution of gas is also expected to increase from 19 per cent to 70 per cent."

Dr Mahathir said to ensure that the country received uninterrupted and reliable power supply at a reasonable cost, the Government had introduced competition and liberalised the

power sector particularly in the field of generation.

"A total of six Independent Power Producers have been licensed with an investment of RM9 billion. When fully operational by the year 1996/97, they would contribute 4,000 megawatts of electricity.

"Through this liberalisation of the industry, the Government will continue to ensure an effective supervision over the sector."

He also hoped that with the launching of the Malaysian Grid Code, it would further strengthen regulations and guidelines pertaining to the planning, operation and maintenance of complex interconnected power supply systems.

Dr Mahathir said the electricity industry was an important sector of the economy and that the present 6,000 megawatt power de-

mand would soar to more than 35,000 megawatts by the year 2020.

To meet the increased demand, he said investments were expected to exceed RM100 million within the next 20 years.

"With development, opportunities are open not only in the field of power generation, transmission and distribution but also in related areas such as manufacture of cables, conductors, switch gears and other equipment."

He said the decrease in fossil fuels would push up the price and more investments would be needed to generate power from renewable energy sources.

"Without proper planning the supply of electricity may be affected and this will impede the country's industrialisation process."

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