

Privatisation exercise benefits everyone, says Dr M

By Farush Khan

KLANG, Fri. — The Government's privatisation exercise benefits not only those who get the projects but all parties, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said through privatisation, consumers would normally get better service, workers get higher pay and opportunities, entrepreneurs make profits and the Government could cut its expenses and collect tax.

"With this revenue, the

Government does not have to increase taxes to obtain its allocations for administrative expenditure, but instead can increase the civil servants' income through wage increase or bonus payment," he said.

Dr Mahathir was launching the computerised vehicle inspection centre of the Pusat Pemeriksaan Kendaraan Berkomputer Sdn Bhd (Puspakom) at Padang Jawa here. Puspakom is a subsidiary of Diversified Resources Bhd (DRB).

Dr Mahathir said no one

could deny the fact that privatisation had succeeded in expediting the provision of infrastructural facilities and helping the country's economic growth.

"If we were to wait until the Government saves enough money before meeting the requirements for infrastructures, investment and economic development, our efforts will certainly be hampered and the people will lose," he said.

The Prime Minister also referred to certain quarters who had criticised the pri-

vatization efforts claiming that it would be detrimental to Bumiputeras.

He said this was not true as there were no major Bumiputera companies which did not gain greatly from privatisation.

"Even small Bumiputera companies and individuals cannot claim they do not get any benefit from privatisation," he said.

Dr Mahathir said what was regrettable was that there were Bumiputera entrepreneurs who applied for privatised projects but later

gave them to non-Bumiputeras.

Their action not only negated efforts to restructure society, but also tarnished the good image of Bumiputeras.

This behaviour of a fraction of them has resulted in other Bumiputera entrepreneurs and Bumiputeras as a whole to become victims. They will not be trusted and treated well either by the Government, the banks or other authorities dealing with Bumiputeras.

Dr Mahathir reminded

the people not to blame the Government each time a programme to help Bumiputeras failed.

"They must also think of the actions of certain people who are out for quick gains without regard for their own race," he said.

He said that if it appeared that only specific companies were getting privatised projects from the Government, it was only because they had proven their effi-

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ciency and were not out to make quick gains.

"Furthermore, most of these companies are trustees for Malays and Bumiputeras," he said.

He assured the people that opportunities were always open to those who could prove their capability and sincerity.

Dr Mahathir congratulated DRB for taking over the inspection of commercial vehicles from the Road Transport Department.

He believed that with the privatisation of the service, the inspection of commercial vehicles could be done more efficiently and speedily.

He said DRB was not only responsible to the community, but also to other Bumiputeras.

"The service quality given by DRB in vehicle inspection can help improve the quality of life of the people and protect them from road accidents.

"DRB's success not only convinced the Government, investors and the people of the capability of Bumiputera companies, but also redeemed the dignity of Bumiputera traders and entrepreneurs," he said.

He said the National Development Policy was aimed at getting quality Bumiputera participation and not quantity as was the case in the New Economic Policy.

He said the number and level of Bumiputera participation could diminish if left in the hands of inefficient Bumiputeras who were impatient to become rich.

"But quality participation

by efficient Bumiputeras will perhaps increase the quantity permanently in their hands," he said.

He hoped the balance of development between Bumiputeras and non-Bumiputeras would help develop the country towards achieving the Vision 2020 objectives.

Dr Mahathir also touched on the need to preserve clean environment, saying that development, progress and facilities would become meaningless if the people were exposed to pollution.

He said pollution and accidents were not because of vehicles, but the lack of responsibility among the users.

He said the people should therefore realise that the Government imposed rules and regulations on vehicle maintenance not because it

wanted to burden them, but for their own safety.

Dr Mahathir reminded the parties which were given the job to inspect the vehicles not to just think of the profit, but also their responsibility to check efficiently in the interest of the road users.

"If inspection is not done efficiently for what ever reason, we will revoke their licence," he said.

He also warned that stern action would be taken against those whose vehicles passed inspections for whatever reasons, though they did not deserve it.

Also present were Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Public Enterprises Minister Datuk Dr Yusof Nor.