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Plan-Reaction (Roundup)
ALL ROUND SUPPORT FOR 7MP

KUALA LUMPUR, May 6 (Bernama) -- The Seventh Malaysia Plan (7MP), tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the Dewan Rakyat today, has been welcomed by leaders and various groups of people.

The plan, which takes the nation to the dawn of a new century, has been described as having the right strategies for boosting the country's development towards becoming an economic power and at the same time improving the people's standard of living.

In PULAU PINANG, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said the 7MP is very comprehensive and covers all aspects of development with special emphasis on efforts to step up the industrial sector's competitiveness.

He said Pulau Pinang's own experience showed that the stress should be on science and technology and human resources development, which the state government has been doing since five years ago.

He said the allocations made for joint-venture infrastructure projects between the government and private sectors are most welcomed.

On the shift from labour-intensive to capital-intensive and high-technology industries, Koh said the state government had through the Pulau Pinang Development Corporation long practised such a policy.

In ALOR SETAR, Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff said the 7MP would further boost national development and reflects the government's seriousness in meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

"The strategies and aims of the 7MP also place an heavy responsibility on the people as in order to face the world situation in the future, we must step up our productivity...it must be done in a big way," he said.

Osman said the state government would streamline its development policies to be in line with the national objectives.

In this regard, the Kedah Development Action Plan, introduced during the Sixth Malaysia Plan period, will also be reviewed, he added.

Academician Prof Tan Sri Awang Had Salleh welcomed the various programmes in in the 7MP especially those related to education.

He described the government's efforts to have single-session classes in all schools as a smart move.

On the move to bring down the school-starting age from seven to six, Prof Awang Had said it had long been practised in other countries successfully.

He also welcomed the government's move to set up a lot of skills training institutes to help the country achieve developed status, saying Malaysia is still short of semi-skilled workers.

In MELAKA, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Zin Abdul Ghani said the state government will spend a big portion of its RM1.191 billion allocation under the 7MP on infrastructure projects and industries in line with its target of becoming a developed state by the year 2010.

He said the state government has directed the relevant departments and agencies to ensure that all projects receiving allocations under the 7MP are implemented on schedule.

This is because only 85 per cent of the state's allocation under the previous plan had been used to implement projects that had been proposed.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad welcomed the emphasis given to human development and efforts to raise the people's living standard in the 7MP.

This is in line with the state government's efforts to have a

knowledgeable and god-fearing society, he said.

Wan Mokhtar said the state government had implemented various programmes to achieve the objective and is confident that the 7MP would serve as catalyst to expedite the programmes.

On the stress on investments in high-technology industries and those utilising less labour, the Menteri Besar said the state government has already taken steps to train skilled workers by setting up training centres such as the the Terengganu Advanced Technical Institute and the Terengganu Skills Development Centre.

The move will help reduce foreign workers in the country who currently number about two million, he added.

Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Taib Mahmud said that like previous plans, the 7MP would continue bring development to the nation.

He said the government's plan to provide more skilled labour through training programmes would help Sarawak's timber industry.

Taib was confident that the 7MP would help reduce the poverty rate in Sarawak to below 10 per cent. --BERNAMA