

08 MAR 1996

Mahathir-TV

PRESERVE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES, MAHATHIR TELLS BUSINESSMEN ABROAD

By: Zainoor Sulaiman

HANOI, March 8 (Bernama) -- Malaysian businessmen abroad representing Malaysia Incorporated are expected to preserve fundamental values within a viable commercial context, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"This is Malaysia's stand when participating in the economy of Vietnam and other countries," he said after witnessing the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between Vinabumi, a Malaysian company, Vietnam Television, Binariang and Reg Grundy Productions during a visit to the Vietnamese television station.

Present were Vietnamese Vice-Premier Nguyen Khanh and the chairman of the Central Ideology and Cultural Department of the Vietnamese Communist Party Ha Dang and members of the Malaysian delegation.

Dr Mahathir said the media was, in any territory, one of the most sensitive areas of business to go into. It required and demanded a sensitivity to the local culture, customs and ideology of the host country.

"We have learnt in Malaysia that in this age where access to information technology and to all forms of media increases by the day; the development of these fields need not be at the expense of our intrinsic morals and values," he added.

He described the signing of the MoUs as a historic occasion whereby two Malaysian-owned companies have been able to forge the closest of links with Vietnam through the field of media and telecommunications.

"One company has committed to invest a considerable sum of money to facilitate Vietnam Television's obligations to provide the widest national coverage of its programmes, whilst another is providing the means through which this national objective can be achieved," he said.

It was all the more significant given Vietnam's recent entry into the brotherhood of Asean, he added.

Dr Mahathir said it was not so long ago that it would have been inconceivable for Malaysian companies to venture out of the country to compete in the open market with companies from more developed countries.

"Now, not only is this becoming commonplace, but we have today a Malaysian-owned satellite, managed by Malaysians, providing the facilities through which other Malaysian companies may participate in the national development of fellow Asean members, and indeed Asia," he added.

Under the MOU between Vinabumi Transmitters (VBT) Ltd. and Vietnam Television (VTV), the latter would install a nationwide network of transmitters and relay stations to enable VTV to broadcast independently of its existing network.

The MOU also covered local production of programming, pre- and post-production, upgrading and renovation of existing facilities and various related activities, to enable VTV to achieve various targets set out in its master plan.

A unique feature of the co-operation was the leasing of transponder facilities on the Malaysia East Asia Satellite (MEASAT).

VBT is a company under the Vinabumi Group which is involved in various activities in Vietnam and other Indochinese states, like infrastructure, sports events management, media, property development and promotion of cultural events.

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