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Finding strategies, solving problems at 2-day congress

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EVALUATING the Bumiputera Commercial and Industrial Community (BCIC) will be the main objective of the upcoming Fourth Bumiputera Economic Congress (KEB4).

The two-day congress, which begins on Friday, will be officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

To be attended by leaders in the public and private sectors, business associations and representatives from private institutions of higher learning, KEB4 also aims to provide input to the Second National Economic Consultative Council.

Discussions will be conducted in seven workshops, which will cover the following topics:

- * strengthening Bumiputera involvement in trading and industrial sector;
- * the development of education and utilisation of manpower in fulfilling Bumiputera agenda;
- * the development of Bumiputera involvement in high technology;
- * the development of Bumiputera involvement in Information Technology;
- * the role of trust agencies and public sector companies as catalysts in the development of Bumiputera entrepreneurs;
- * the role of financial institutions in enhancing the creation of trade and industry driven Bumiputera community, and;
- * inculcation of cultural and religious values in creating a competitive Bumiputera individual.

Two working papers will be presented on The Achievements of Bumiputeras in the Economic Sector and The Achievements of Bumiputeras in Education.

The first Bumiputera Economic Congress, held in 1965, aimed to correct the racial economic imbalance at the time. Led by Umno and the Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, political and economic leaders thrashed out the strategies needed to create the BCIC.

Among the notable successes of the first congress was the establishment of Bank Bumiputra and the promotion of Mara college into Institut Teknologi Mara. The second congress, held in 1980, aimed to iron out problems that had developed in the course of achieving the New Economic Policy's objectives.

Among the events which had hampered the creation of the BCIC was the mid-1980s recession.

Held from Jan 10-13, 1992, KEB3, meanwhile, set out to develop a more resilient Bumiputera entrepreneurs. The theme of the third Congress was Towards Developing a Resilient Bumiputera Society in Trade and Industry.

Ten working papers were presented. Among those who presented working papers were the Malay Chamber of Commerce chairman Dr Nawawi Mat Awin, Permodalan Nasional Bhd group chief executive Datuk Abdul Khalid Ibrahim and Bank Negara Governor Tan Sri Jaafar Hussein.

The third congress was attended by 522 participants from the public and private sectors.

A re-examination of Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera business ties and other attitudinal changes were discussed.

The third congress also saw the adoption of more than 25 resolutions to help develop a resilient BCIC and create a Bumiputera Economic Consultative Council to chart programmes and policies pertaining to the BCIC as well as to help advise Bumiputera entrepreneurs.

Among the resolutions adopted by the third Congress were aimed at:

- * adopting strategies to ensure Bumiputera entrepreneurs dominate strategic economic sectors and areas;
- * adopting the Chinese "kongsi" concept to encourage greater co-operation among Bumiputeras and between them and non-Bumiputeras;
- * pursuing further the Government's privatisation concept to provide Bumiputeras with various business opportunities and management experience;
- * preparing a list of business ethics based on Islamic values for the benefit of Bumiputera entrepreneurs.
- * setting up a centre for entrepreneurial development to train more Bumiputera entrepreneurs and increase their numbers;
- * extending the scope of joint ventures between Bumiputeras and non-Bumiputeras to include new schemes, foreign participation in those joint ventures, and local equity in selected new foreign investments;
- * establishing a science and technology "intelligentsia" to enable BCIC to attain a high level of technological know-how and expertise;
- * forming strategic linkages between the BCIC and multinational companies based locally and abroad;
- * establishing a marketing research unit under the PNB to identify prospective industries and marketing channels and provide information to potential Bumiputera entrepreneurs.

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