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MAHATHIR-NEP
SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH NEP AND PNB

KUALA LUMPUR, June 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today that the New Economic Policy (NEP) and its most important tool, Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB), is Malaysia's way of providing social justice and safetynet.

PNB is a unique creation which is not available in any other countries, and it is much better than the ideology approach normally created to shape a just and fair society, he said at the launching of PNB's Investment week here today.

He said PNB, which has succeeded in mobilising more than RM48 million from seven million investors, whether it is known or not, is the largest trust fund in the world.

"There are a number of foreigners talking about social safety net now. To them social safetynet meant giving unemployment benefits to those who are unemployed. They also want us to give salaries which are at the same level as their salaries and others," Dr Mahathir said .

However, their ways would infact ruin the economy, because if those who are unemployed are given allowances, there would be many who would choose not to work.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysia believed in the social safetynet but not in the form of unemployment benefits. The rakyat need to work and the social safetynet is in providing more jobs.

Currently, he said in the United Kingdom, those given unemployment benefits were also asked to work by the government, and that there were now lesser interest on the idea of getting free money from the government, even from the socialist.

He added that unemployment benefits needed a large amount of financial allocation and this was done by raising taxes from those who are willing to work.

With higher living standards, unemployment benefits and taxes also needed to be increased, and in turn there would be an inrease in production costs which would reduce competitiveness in the world market, Dr Mahathir added.

"We may think that despite their approach not being that good, they are still developed. But their developments come from their ability to reduce prices of raw material bought from developing countries, and selling their own products at prices which keep rising all the time," he added.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister said that the new product, Amanah Saham Nasional Kedua by PNB was launched at the right time when the economy is recovering.

Dr Mahathir also announced that April 20 would be known as Malaysia's Unit Trust Week, to coincide with the launch of the first Unit Trust Scheme on April 20, 1981.

He said that such an investment week was important to assist small investors to invest, and that subsequently all would have the opportunity to own shares in Malaysia. -- BERNAMA

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