

Seven-prong plan for Sabah bumis

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Feasibility study to be undertaken on ways to help retailers in major towns

By Roy Goh

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KOTA KINABALU Sat The government will continue to give priority to bumiputra entrepreneurs in Sabah through government contracts to enable them to catch up with other successful communities

The Entrepreneur Development Ministry will also conduct a feasibility study on ways to help bumiputra retailers prosper in major towns across the state Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today

Triad suspects held under emergency law Page 5

Opening the Sabah Bumiputra Economic Congress here today Mahathir said the government has drawn up a seven pronged approach in the Bumiputra Commercial and Industrial Community programme aimed at building the capabilities of bumiputras in the state

The programme can help groom more middle class bumiputra entrepreneurs to balance the economic success of non bumiputras he said

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Bumiputra achievement still low Mahathir

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However bumiputra entrepreneurs need to move fast to catch up with others need to stand up and be prepared to face challenges and competitions that will come together with globalisation in the new millennium

If the government gives the same treatment to non bumiputras they will take full control of the country's economy he said

Mahathir said bumiputra achievement is still low and disappointing even with the privileges accorded to them

The government is willing to be condemned accused of practising cronyism being unfair and many

other unjust allegations

But what is the use of getting all this condemnation if the real purpose of balancing the bumiputra economic status with the non bumiputras is not achieved? Mahathir asked

Other approaches under the programme are

► to further develop and intensify programmes including entrepreneurship programmes specifically for women

► the Education Ministry to work closely with the Entrepreneur Development Ministry to increase the number of institutions to train young entrepreneurs

► Sabah's institutions of higher learning to start more short and long term

courses including programmes for government officers or those in the private sector who are about to retire

► the Foreign Ministry International Trade and Industry Ministry and Sabah's Industrial Development Ministry to play an aggressive role in speeding up the regional growth to open new opportunities for bumiputra entrepreneurs and

► the government will widen the concept of vendor/vendee and franchiser/franchisee in Sabah to encourage more business opportunities in sectors such as manufacturing petroleum energy telecommunications furniture electronics and plastics