

23 APR 2001

Mahathir-8MP (Bumiputera)

BUMIPUTERA ICT COUNCIL TO BE ESTABLISHED

KUALA LUMPUR, April 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that a Bumiputera information and communications technology (ICT) council will be established to plan and develop a Bumiputera ICT agenda.

He said the agenda would include strategies to increase awareness of the opportunities in the ICT industry and develop a pool of Bumiputera ICT entrepreneurs.

"It will also include strategies to provide greater accessibility to capital and market information as well as establish linkages with international markets," he said when tabling the Eighth Malaysia Plan (8MP) at the Dewan Rakyat.

Apart from ICT, the government would continue to promote Bumiputera participation in strategic and high technology industries, namely biotechnology, petrochemical and communications, he said.

He also said that measures would be undertaken to identify talented Bumiputeras for intensive training in financial management and enterprises.

He said this would instil the appropriate ethics for the success of their businesses in line with efforts to develop the Bumiputera commercial and industrial community (BCIC).

Dr Mahathir said only those who were willing to undergo these courses would be provided with opportunities, licences, capital and the like.

"If any of them is found to have misappropriated the opportunities or fund, they will be blacklisted," he said.

Emphasising that Bumiputera should give serious attention towards the formation of the BCIC, Dr Mahathir said the BCIC programme was not a scheme to get rich quickly but it was a serious effort towards restructuring society in order to attain an equitable balance between the Bumiputera and the non-Bumiputera in Malaysia.

He said that entrepreneurial training programmes would be intensified to enable Bumiputera entrepreneurs face the challenges of globalisation and utilise more knowledge content in their activities.

He said these programmes would give emphasis in preparing Bumiputera entrepreneurs to be more self-reliant, competitive and practise good business ethics.

In addition, such training programmes would also inculcate positive values such as the need to be trustworthy, hardworking and disciplined, which were necessary traits to build successful and resilient Bumiputera entrepreneurs, he said.

Towards this end, Dr Mahathir said the National Institute of Entrepreneurship would be established as a focal point to undertake strategic planning on entrepreneurship, market intelligence, research and development (R&D), curriculum development, business networking and counselling.

-- BERNAMA

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