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Contracts blacklist (HL)

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DUNGUN, Sat. - Bumiputera businessmen and contractors who sell the contracts, licences and permits to import cars they receive for quick gain will be blacklisted.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government would ensure that they would not receive any more contracts, licences and APs (Approved Permit) in the future.

"We will do a review. We want to remind them that those who want to do business and seek government contracts must have no intention of selling them," he said when replying to a question after launching the Settlers Day 2001 celebrations at Bandar Ketengah Jaya.

He was asked to comment on a newspaper report that most contractors engaged to construct computer laboratories for schools had failed to complete their projects within the stipulated time.

Dr Mahathir said a study would be conducted to determine the status of each of the projects and when the contractors were supposed to complete them. "Any project which failed to get off the ground would mean that the contractors have failed."

He said the Press report stated that three companies were picked to carry out the projects.

"Surely they cannot do the work on their own. They will pick other Bumiputera contractors to develop the labs. The problem is that those who were picked have not done the job. They sell the contracts to others who in turn re-sell them for profit.

"So when it comes to the company which actually carries out the projects, the (profit margin) has become too low and they cannot do a proper job," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this was happening all the time.

"The same is happening to taxi permits. They are re-sold a number of times and, in the end, the drivers do not make a profit because the rentals for the taxi are too high," he said.

"Government contracts have become a trading commodity, being peddled from one place to another. There are people who receive government contracts worth hundreds of millions of ringgit who re-sell them for a paltry sum if there are others willing to pay them.

"If the Government makes noise, these people will get angry. Only a few of them who are really doing the job or business on their own are successful." He said the Government had come up with many ways to help Bumiputeras succeed but in the end they were the ones who ruined their opportunities.

"They are the ones who determined that they would never succeed. They have to change this habit," he said.

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