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Mahathir-Contracts

NO MORE PROJECTS FOR THOSE WHO SOLD CONTRACTS, SAYS DR M

DUNGUN, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the government will stop giving contracts to those found to have sold their contracts or business permits.

"This is the problem we are facing...often when we award a contract, licence, AP (Approved Permit), the recipient did not carry out the business but sold the contract, AP, licence," he told reporters after visiting the house of settler Mamat Abdullah at Felda Kertih 5 near here.

Dr Mahathir had earlier launched the national Settlers Day at Padang Astaka in Bandar Ketengah Jaya, near here.

He said this when asked to comment on the failure of almost all contractors in building computer laboratories in the country as was stated by Deputy Education Minister Datuk Aziz Shamsuddin yesterday.

"We have thought of various ways to help Bumiputeras but Bumiputeras themselves are creating problems...they themselves will decide. They may not succeed as long as this habit exists, sorrylah.

"Now we want to make sure that whoever sold these contracts will not be given anymore contracts," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the problem of failure of contractors appointed to build school computer laboratories should be studied carefully.

"We need to ascertain whether they (laboratories) were half completed or not completed. We know of some projects that were not started at all, (and) this means they have failed," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the problem was said to have occurred because the three companies selected to implement the project could not do it.

"They picked other Bumiputera companies to build the laboratories, and the problem was that the Bumiputera companies selected by them did not do the job and instead sold the contract to other people and they sold it to others, at a profit.

"That is why when it reached the company that was to implement the project, the price became too cheap and they suffered losses and could not implement the work properly," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government would like to review the award of contracts but it was important that businessmen and contractors should not apply for contracts with the intention to sell them.

"Sometimes they hawk contracts worth hundreds of millions, hawking here and there to give to anyone willing to pay them 2-3 million, 4-5 million. This happens all the time and they got angry if we commented, but this is their business, they trade in licences, contracts, AP," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the problem of trading in licences and contracts also happened in the taxi business.

"It is the same for a taxi licence. Those who got it did not do anything, Others who took over did not do anything and sold it to people willing to invest, two or three levels and finally the taxi driver did not make profit as he had to pay for the rental on his own," he said.

However, Dr Mahathir said not all Bumiputera contractors were like that.

"There are only several contractors who are really doing business and they are successful.

"That is why when I launched Naza Motor (recently) I explained that Naza Motor is the one which obtained the AP, but it did not sell the AP for buying cars and it does business," he said.

-- BERNAMA  
MS/MRA YBY