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Mahathir-Budget

2003 BUDGET TO ADOPT DIFFERENT STRATEGY, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the 2003 Budget to be tabled on Sept 20 will adopt a different strategy for the development of the country.

He hoped the business community would cooperate with the government to make the new strategy a success.

Dr Mahathir, who is also finance minister, did not elaborate on the strategy in his speech at the Malaysia South-South Association's (MASSA) 10th anniversary dinner tonight.

The prime minister commended local businessmen for their efforts in venturing abroad, saying it not only brought business opportunities but also made Malaysia well known worldwide.

The setting up of MASSA by the business community in 1991 to promote bilateral trade and investment ties with fellow South countries was especially laudable, he said.

Dr Mahathir initiated the idea for the commission of the association following his visit to Chile, Brazil and Argentina with Malaysian businessmen in June 1991.

Dr Mahathir said that since MASSA was born, it had being quite active investing in various countries and even owning buildings in places like Santiago, Chile.

He said the business community had also spread the knowledge about Malaysia in their business ventures abroad.

"Malaysia was a totally unknown country before the war," he said, adding that it was the least known among the original Asean countries of Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines.

"But now Malaysia is better known ...we are now better developed and manage our country peacefully besides the 1997 incident that we have overcome," he said.

The prime minister said Malaysia was in the process of achieving greater progress and development which still needed contribution from the business community.

-- BERNAMA

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