

03 NOV 2002

Mahathir-Cambodia

DR MAHATHIR ASKS MALAYSIAN BUSINESSES TO ASSIST CAMBODIA

By: Tham Choy Lin and Muin Abdul Majid

PHNOM PENH, Nov 3 (Bernama) - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded the Malaysian businesses here to work alongside their Cambodian counterparts to help the once war-ravaged country get back on its feet.

He said Malaysian companies had the expertise and technology to transfer to Cambodia and expressed hope that one day, Malaysian and Cambodian companies would be able to carry out joint ventures in other countries.

"Malaysian companies can work with Cambodian companies and help them grow and do what Malaysian companies are doing now," he said when opening a 35 megawatt diesel power plant of Cambodia Utilities Pte Ltd belonging to a Malaysian consortium led by Leader Universal Holdings Berhad at Chak Angre district, about five kilometres from here.

Also present at the ceremony were Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng, Industry, Mines and Energy Minister Ith Praing and Leader Universal chairman Tan Sri Razali Ismail.

The Prime Minister, who arrived in the afternoon to attend the two-day 8th Asean Summit starting here tomorrow, had earlier toured the Pochentong International Airport that is also managed by another Malaysian-owned company, Muhibbah Engineering (Cambodia) Pte Ltd.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that Malaysian businesses should follow a "prosper thy neighbour" approach in their ventures abroad so that both sides can continue to trade.

He suggested that Malaysians help develop Cambodia's tourism industry which holds immense potential as the country has many historical attractions.

Dr Mahathir, who later attended a Deepavali reception for the Malaysian community at the hotel he is staying, said Malaysian companies must not forget their social obligations in Cambodia.

He asked them to help schools and to provide training and other humanitarian assistance.

Ith Praing invited more Malaysian companies to involve themselves actively in his country's development programmes.

Speaking at the power plant launching ceremony, he said: "I recognise that many Malaysian companies have the experience and know-how to participate actively in the development of various sectors of industry."

-- BERNAMA

TCL MAM MUN AFY YBY