

16 SEP 2003

Mahathir-Staff

DR MAHATHIR THANKS CIVIL SERVANTS

PUTRAJAYA, Sept 16 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight thanked all civil servants for the close cooperation given in implementing all government policies throughout his tenure as Prime Minister.

"I would like to say thank you very much indeed. Throughout my career I have full cooperation from civil servants and all other employees of the government," he said.

He said he appreciated the services of the civil servants whom he described as professionals in enabling the country to achieve success in its endeavours.

"All the civil servants supported, implemented and carried out the government's policies the way the government wanted it to be," he said at a Budget 2004 dinner to fete Treasury staff involved in preparing the 2004 Budget tabled last friday.

The dinner was also attended by Second Finance Minister Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis, former deputy Finance Minister who is now Transport Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsuddin Osman and Finance Ministry Secretary-General Tan Sri Dr Samsudin Hitam.

He also thanked participants of the pre-budget dialogues including businessmen and members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who had given suggestions and inputs pertaining to the 2004 Budget.

"I did not think that it (the 2004 Budget) could be ready by the next day but with the cooperation of the Treasury staff, we succeeded in completing it. I am impressed with the cooperation shown by the Treasury staff," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that the 2004 Budget was prepared according to the capacity of the government to cater for the needs of the people and country.

"To give everything that the people want is sometime not possible...we have to look at the needs, our capacity."

He said the country spent according to its capacity and did not want to incur too much debt.

He said if the government was heavily in debt, the country would become bankrupt.

As such, he said, he would as far as possible be most prudent in spending government funds and this was reflected in the tabling of the budget recently which catered for all sectors.

--BERNAMA

RIZ JM AO