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Dr M: Bumis must be more investment-savvy

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged Bumiputeras to be more investment-savvy as it could help raise their economic standing.

"Bumiputera investors are still immature. They expect high returns on every investment. They fail to realise that in every business, there will be ups and downs."

At an appreciation dinner organised by the Yayasan Pelaburan Bumiputera and Permodalan Nasional Bhd Group at a hotel tonight, he said Bumiputeras must be taught to understand the concept of doing business whereby one could make profits or suffer losses.

"Those who invested in unit trusts managed by PNB often grumble when the dividends are not as high as they expected.

"They are not even grateful that they are still getting something even during the bad times."

Dr Mahathir said PNB had not only helped make the National Economic Policy a success, but also strengthened the economy through investments.

"There are many reasons why it's good to invest in PNB. It is not only 'open-ended', where there is no limit to buying or selling shares but you are also guaranteed a 'fixed price' for your investment.

"It means when you want to sell your shares, the price will be same as when you first bought them," said Dr Mahathir, who was YPB chairman from 1978 to 2003.

PNB, the country's largest fund manager, has eight million investors with funds worth more than RM60 billion. Most of its investments are in the stock market.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is the current chairman of YPB, praised Dr Mahathir for his immense contributions in enlarging the Bumiputera economic share.

In a speech read by Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, he said Dr Mahathir's financial policies had also earned the respect from the international community.

"I will now ensure that PNB continues getting the support from its investors."