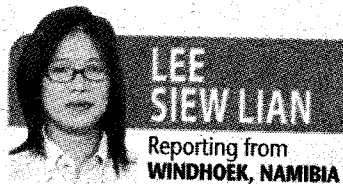


Malaysia set to be role model for Namibia

NST- 22/4/2007



LEE SIEW LIAN

Reporting from
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

AFRICAN nations are looking East, and Malaysia is prepared to be their role model, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Malaysia has many similarities with these countries, and its rapid development could be replicated here, he said at the conclusion of his week-long African visit yesterday.

There was a great deal of interest in how Malaysia's policies brought development to its people, Abdullah said after the state banquet hosted by Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba on Friday night.

There had also been requests for more training opportunities under the Malaysian Technical Co-operation Programme.

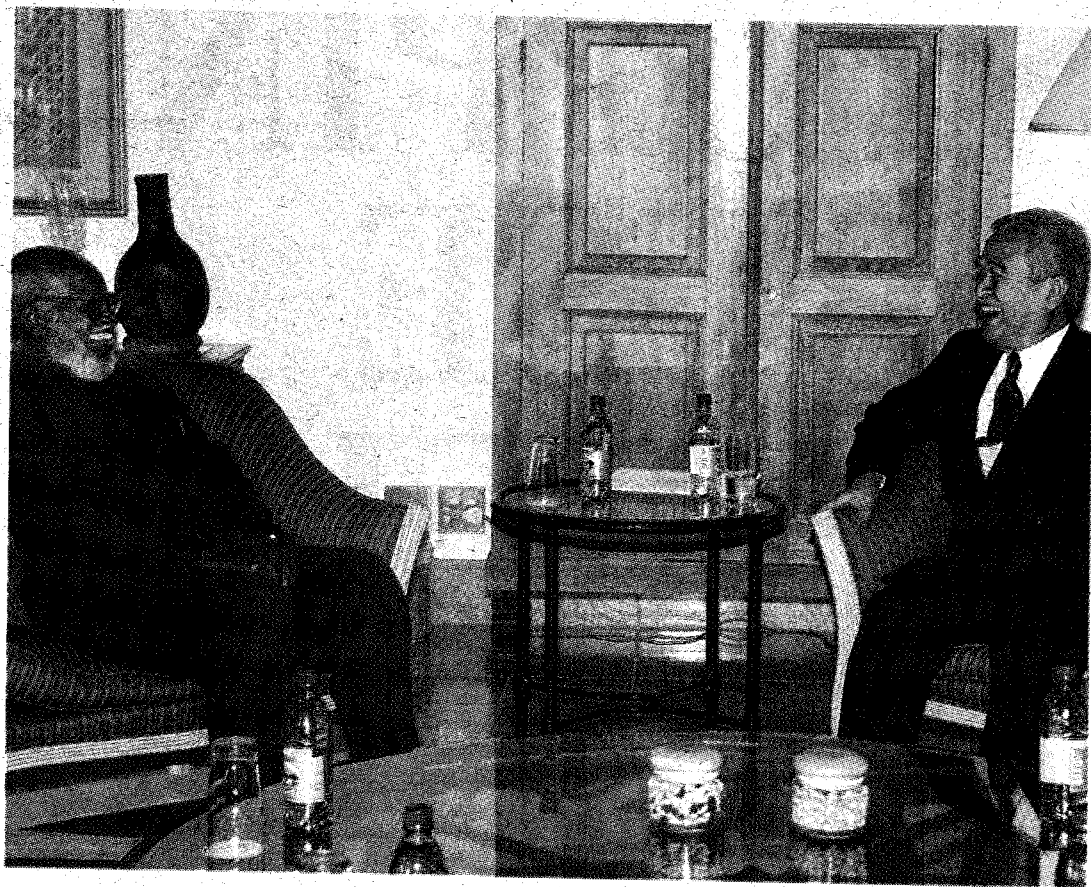
"They want more exposure to policy implementation and they want to build individual and institutional capacities.

"They are also interested in developing private entrepreneurship as they realise that this is important," he said.

Namibia, the world's least populated nation, was the last stop in Abdullah's three-country tour in Africa. He had earlier visited Sudan and Kenya.

One of the objectives of his African visit was to open doors to the Malaysian private sector, and to encourage more trade and investment with each of the three countries.

Namibia has duty- and quota-free access to the United States,



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi sharing a light moment with Namibian founding president Dr Sam Nujoma at the Windhoek Country Club Resort on Friday. — Bernama picture

and preferential entry to the European market.

It is also a member of the 14-country South African Customs Union which has a population of 200 million.

Kenya is a stable country that could be a springboard into eastern Africa and its population of 560 million for Malaysian companies.

It is also recording an economic growth rate of more than five per cent a year, the strongest for more

than a decade.

Oil-rich Sudan is beginning to invest in infrastructure, reaping the rewards of peace following the end of 21 years of civil war in the south, and the relative calm secured in Darfur recently.

"(Malaysian businessmen) have to think beyond just production, and should consider the markets that these countries represent," he said yesterday.

Referring to the disturbance in Ijok on Thursday, the prime min-

ister expressed disappointment, saying the incident "should not have happened".

"Provocative action should be avoided in campaigning for the by-election," Abdullah said.

"Doing so does not mean you will win."

Supporters of Barisan Nasional and Parti Keadilan Rakyat threw volleys of plastic water bottles at each other in a brief skirmish on nomination day for the Ijok by-election.