

IPOH, NOV. 26 (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TOLD MALAYSIAN WORKERS TODAY TO PROVE THAT THEY WERE PRODUCTIVE SO THAT MORE FOREIGNERS WOULD INVEST IN THE COUNTRY.

+OUR INVESTMENT PROMOTION EFFORTS ARE PAYING OFF, + THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY SAID, +AND IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT OUR WORKERS DO THEIR PART BY PROVING THEIR PRODUCTIVITY.+

OPENING THE ASSEMBLY PLANT OF J.A. CRABTREE (M) SDN. BHD., A BRITISH-MALAYSIAN JOINT VENTURE PRODUCING CIRCUIT BREAKERS, HE

HE SAID THAT PRODUCTIVITY WAS A MAJOR CONCERN OF EVERY INVESTOR.

+IT IS THE FIRST QUESTION I ENCOUNTERED FROM BUSINESSMEN IN ALL MY OVERSEAS MISSIONS,+ DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ADDED.

THIS QUESTION, HE SAID, WAS BEST ANSWERED BY EXAMPLE, AND +THE TASK IS LEFT TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO OBTAIN JOBS IN FACTORIES SET UP IN MALAYSIA AS A RESULT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INVESTMENT DRIVE.+ — BERNAMA MORE 1410/SZ

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DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID; +WE HAVE DONE OUR PART. IT IS UP TO THESE PEOPLE TO PROVE THE CAPABILITY OF MALAYSIAN WORKERS SO THAT OUR LABOUR FORCE WOULD BE A MAJOR FACTOR TO ENCOURAGE INVESTORS TO COME TO MALAYSIA.+

HE SAID THAT CERTAIN GROUPS IN THE COUNTRY HAD PURPOSELY DISTORTED THE GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM TO MALAYSIA HAVING A LOW COST LABOUR FORCE.

THE EXISTANCE OF A LOW COST LABOUR FORCE, HE ADDED, DID NOT MEAN THAT WAGES IN MALAYSIA WERE LOW BY MALAYSIAN STANDARD.

+WHAT IS TRUE IS THAT OUR WAGES ARE 10 TIMES LOWER THAN THOSE PAID IN, SAY, JAPAN, BUT REMEMBER THAT IN JAPAN AN APPLE COSTS ABOUT 16 TIMES MORE THAN IN MALAYSIA.

+IT IS A CASE OF MALAYSIA HAVING A LOWER COST OF LIVING THAN PAYING LOWER WAGES,+ HE SAID. — BERNAMA MORE 1415/SZ

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BUT WHAT STILL MATTERED TO INVESTORS WAS THAT MALAYSIA'S LABOUR FORCE WAS ONE OF THE CHEAPEST AVAILABLE.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE SAME PRESSURE GROUPS HAD QUESTIONED THE GOVERNMENT'S MOTIVE FOR ENCOURAGING FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

THEY SUGGESTED, HE ADDED, THAT FOREIGN INVESTMENT WOULD MAKE THE RICH RICHER WHEREAS MALAYSIANS WOULD NOT BE BETTER OFF.

THEY DID NOT MENTION THE FACT THAT COUNTLESS UNEMPLOYED MALAYSIANS HAD FOUND A LIVELIHOOD WORKING IN FACTORIES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.

+WE MAY NOT NEED THE MONEY FROM FOREIGN INVESTORS TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY, BUT WE CERTAINLY REQUIRE THE JOBS THAT THEIR FACTORIES CAN PROVIDE FOR OUR JOBLESS MALAYSIANS,+ DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID. — BERNAMA 1417/SZ