

Dr M explains industrial bias

By HARDEV KAUR **Staff** 12 APR 1982

EMPLOYEES of various industries have been advised to make full use of the opportunities provided by the government to improve their incomes and ensure for themselves a better life.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday if the employees of various industries worked diligently to help ensure a better future for the industry, they would also be helping to ensure employment opportunities for others in the years ahead.

The Prime Minister, speaking at the opening of the Elite Wood-products (M) Sdn Bhd factory in Parit Buntar, about 80 kilometres from Ipoh, called on the workers not to "kill the goose that lays the golden eggs."

He warned his audience of certain elements out to instigate employees in industries to demand higher incomes from the management without regard to the viability of the industry. Any gains made under such an approach would not endure if the industry was handicapped by the burden.

The Prime Minister

said the government's emphasis on industrialisation and diversification of economic activity in the country was aimed at ensuring a better livelihood for the people.

He pointed out that tin and petroleum were both depleting resources, and once these ran out there would be no revenue from them.

It is in view of this that the government is reinvesting the revenue earned from petroleum into other areas to ensure continued returns for the people.

At the same time other industries are being set up, including those in rural areas, to provide employment for more people as tin, petroleum, rubber and oil palm estates could not absorb the growing labour force.

The employment in the mining sector would not increase substantially in the future. Besides being a depleting industry, the use of new technologies would also reduce the number of people employed by them.

The Prime Minister pointed out that if the country was to be solely

dependent on rubber and palm oil for employment, the majority of the people would be living in "absolute poverty."

Dr Mahathir said that the government's policy in industrialising the country was to help increase the foreign exchange earnings in addition to providing employment.

He said that the emphasis on export-oriented industries was intended to earn the foreign exchange needed to pay for imports, mainly for development needs. If exports were inadequate, an adverse balance of payments would be detrimental to the future of the country.

The Prime Minister said that he was aware of certain elements who claimed that the government was encouraging industries only for material gain. Dr Mahathir said that this is not so as the Barisan government place equal emphasis on religious and spiritual development.

Dr Mahathir said that Malaysia's petroleum resources were estimated to last for another 20 years. When these are exhausted, the loss of rev-

enue from it could not be compensated by rubber and oil palm alone.

It is in view of this that the revenue now being earned from petroleum is being reinvested in other income-generating projects to ensure continued benefits for the people and revenue for the government.

The Prime Minister pointed out that Japan, even though it had no natural resources such as oil, is prosperous due to its prudent investment in a variety of industries.

"Malaysia too can achieve what Japan has done. But we need to make a start now in order to lay the basis for the future development of the country and creation of employment opportunities," he said.

The Prime Minister called on voters to cast their votes wisely to help ensure a better future for the country as well as the future generations.

While the Prime Minister did not say so specifically, he implied that the voters should vote for the Barisan Nasional government again to ensure that they continue to reap the benefits of its policies and projects.