

Foreign unions using our workers to wreck nation: Dr M

SEREMBAN, Sat. — Trade unions and workers in the industrialised countries are making use of local unions and workers to wreck Malaysia's economy, the Prime Minister said today.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said workers from the developed nations were bringing up issues on human and workers' rights in Third World countries as a means to wreck the economies of the developing countries.

"They behave as though they are champions of the workers in the Third World countries when actually all they are interested in is to increase the cost of our goods. Over the years, our products have become cheaper and better than that of the industrialised countries," he said.

"Therefore the only way they

can compete with us is to increase the cost of our products," Dr Mahathir said when opening the 36th national MIC annual delegates conference at the Seremban Municipal Hall here today.

He said these groups tried to influence the actions of the local workers and their unions.

"They advised our workers to make wage claims which their employers cannot yet afford. This way they could increase the price of our products and thus these industrialised countries' workers would benefit. Their group in the ILO (International Labour Organisation) urged the industrialised countries to take action against developing countries for supposedly not respecting human and worker's rights," he said.

"For these workers in the indus-

trialised countries any action against countries like Malaysia would save their jobs at the expense of our local workers," he added.

Dr Mahathir cited the example of the action by the American Soyabean Association (ASA) against the palm oil industry.

"Where were these leaders and champions of the Third World workers when ASA tried to destroy the palm oil industry? Did they defend the palm oil industry for the sake of our workers? Our workers should beware of Greeks bearing gifts," he said.

Dr Mahathir said some local workers supported these groups without considering the consequences of their actions.

He also hit out at certain people

for going around discrediting the country.

"For their own personal gains, they are willing to lie to foreigners. There was even one individual who was willing to urge other countries to take action against Malaysia. His action showed that he did not love his country nor did he consider the welfare of the workers which he is supposed to represent," Dr Mahathir added.

The Barisan Nasional president also reminded the delegates of the role of the Barisan and its tradition of solving problems through discussions.

"There have been doubts about this tradition of discussions but on the whole the tradition has worked. There will always be doubts but we must work to over-

come it. But in the process of overcoming such doubts we must not break into factions or fight each other. We must discuss everything and decisions will be made in these discussions but what is important is that the decisions must be respected. Otherwise it would be pointless," he said.

On the MIC, Dr Mahathir said he was proud of the party.

Dr Mahathir said the MIC had not only protected the interests of its members but also the Indian community.

He also said the country's economy was picking up because of the stability of the country.

"This means that everyone of us has a role to play to ensure the peace and stability of the country," he added.