

NIC TAG NOT VITAL

PM: People's welfare comes first
16 JUL 1989

(F) By Kerry Fong
KUALA LUMPUR, -Sat. — The Government's priority is to make life better for the people and this may not be achieved if Malaysia becomes a newly-industrialised country, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"It is important that we live happily. If we become an NIC, we will face problems," said the Prime Minister.

"The developed countries will force us to raise our currency value and reduce our exports, and take away all the incentives."

He said that if Malaysia became an NIC, developed countries would try to suppress its development and ensure that the country did not catch up with them.

Dr Mahathir said the term NIC was being used widely among politicians, government officers, unions and the Press.

"Actually, Malaysia does not intend to become an NIC. All the Government wants is to achieve a better life for the people," he said when opening the 19th triennial delegates conference of the Malayan Technical Services Union.

Dr Mahathir said the history of the Government's relationship with pub-

lic sector unions clearly showed that many benefits could be derived from co-operation between the two parties.

He said public sector unions had co-operate in solving various matters involving government servants. "Co-operation brings more benefits than confrontation," he added.

He hoped that public sector unions would give priority to a give-and-take attitude in negotiations with their employer.

The Prime Minister said the private sector should play a bigger role in creating jobs, especially after the Government had decided that the private sector should be the main machinery in the country's future economic growth.

He said the creation of jobs helped to eradicate poverty because if there was no economic growth, the Government would find it difficult to support its huge machinery.

He added that unemployment was still a problem because many people were too choosy about jobs or place of work.

Dr Mahathir said that since the Government introduced incentives for investors in various industries, many jobs had been created.

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**Adapt to changes,
PM tells workers**

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He said the newspapers published job advertisements daily and under such conditions, unemployment should not be a problem.

"Many people may not want to leave their kampung; many others believe that certain jobs are not suitable for them."

He said workers should adapt to changes. "If the people are not willing to work, the economy will not grow' and, ultimately, the worker will be the victim."

In apparent reference to the claims by the MTSU for a better scheme of service for technical and agricultural assistants, Dr Mahathir said that any decision made would have to be

based on various considerations and consequences.

He said the most important thing for a politician was the support he got from the people. "However, for every decision made, the considerations should not only be based on popularity alone."

Earlier, outgoing MTSU general secretary A. Rangunathan reminded the Prime Minister that he had agreed to intervene to resolve the union's claims.

Since December 1985, the union has been asking the Government to upgrade the technicians scheme to the Higher School Certificate scheme of service and improve the scheme of services for technical and agricultural assistants.

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