

PM: Move to protect US jobs

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the latest petition to withdraw privileges under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) was not to protect workers' rights but to create unemployment among Malaysians.

In this connection, the Prime Minister said some leaders of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress have sided with the American cause and are championing the plight of Amer-

icans who have lost their jobs rather than protecting Malaysian workers.

He did not name the MTUC leaders, but said the people knew who they were.

The latest petition on this was submitted by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) on Wednesday. It claimed that 30,000 Americans lost their jobs because of imports under the GSP.

Dr Mahathir said: "With this fourth petition, it is

clear that their main priority is not to protect our workers but American jobs. They want to see factories here closing down and re-open in the US so that our people will lose their jobs while the Americans are employed.

"They lost 30,000 jobs simply because of competition with us (to produce the same products at lower prices)."

Speaking to newsmen after officiating Teachers' Day at the Putra World

Trade Centre here, Dr Mahathir said that this was just an excuse to press for the removal of Malaysia's GSP privileges.

The American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) is leading the campaign to get the privileges removed.

On the allegation that electronic workers here are denied the right to form unions, Dr Mahathir said that this was just an excuse.