

PM: MTUC leaders selfish

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today he is not surprised that certain leaders of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress are supporting the American lobbyists to seek the removal of privileges under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP).

These leaders never had the interest of Malaysian workers and, in fact, were more sympathetic to the cause of foreign labour, the Prime Minister said.

As such, MTUC members should seek the removal of these leaders from their posts. Dr Mahathir said MTUC had made clear its policy of supporting or-

ganisations and individuals who were pro-labour.

"If this is indeed the stand of the MTUC, the members should remove several of their leaders who have supported the withdrawal of the country's GSP privileges.

"If the MTUC's stand is to support anyone who is pro-labour, then it should back the Government and the Barisan Nasional and not their leaders who are members of Opposition parties.

"Trade union leaders and Opposition parties which support the GSP withdrawal are actually threatening the rights of workers here and are, in-

fact, defending the interests of American labour," said Dr Mahathir.

He was speaking at the opening of the 19th Gerakan delegates conference here.

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

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

Dr Mahathir said: "Not a

single worker has got a job out of the efforts of the MTUC. It is the Barisan Nasional Government which has been responsible for creating employment.

"These MTUC leaders only wait for the jobless to be employed and then claim that they are champions of the workers."

He said MTUC leaders were only concerned about their positions in the organisation, which is being used to further their political interests.

"Malaysian workers will be unemployed if these leaders and the Opposition parties get the people's support," said Dr Mahathir.