

D073

R E 208 AAE

GSP-MAHATHIR

BM

ARAU, JUN 25 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT MALAYSIA WILL BE MORE -- SUCCESSFUL IN DEFENDING ITS GENERALISED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) STATUS WITH THE SUPPORT OF ITS WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS.

EFFORTS TO RETAIN THE GSP STATUS WOULD FAIL IF TRADE UNION LEADERS INSTIGATED THE UNITED STATES TO WITHDRAW THE TRADE PRIVILEGE HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER A MEETING HERE WITH 81000 PERLIS UMNO LEADERS AND MEMBERS.

HE SAID THAT MALAYSIAN WORKERS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THEY ARE NOT MADE USED OF BY FOREIGNERS WHO ENCOURAGED THEM TO STAGE STRIKES.

THIS WOULD BE A LOSS TO THEM IN THE LONG TERM WHEN THE FACTORIES SHUT DOWN DUE TO THEIR STRIKE ACTION HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE ATTITUDE OF MALAYSIAN TRADES UNION CONGRESS (MTUC) PRESIDENT ENCIK ZAINAL RAMPAK, AND SECRETARY-GENERAL ENCIK V. DAVID, OVER THE GSP ISSUE WOULD BE A LOSS TO THE WORKERS.

MALAYSIA AS A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT COUNTRY SHOULD FORMULATE ITS OWN LABOUR LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND NOT DO SO ON DIRECTIVES FROM OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY HE ADDED, -- MORE

2251MST 2 5 06 9 0

0074

R E209 AAE
GSP-MAHATHIR 2 ARAU

ASKED IF ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST TERRY COLLINGWORTH OF THE LABOUR RIGHTS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FUND FOR INTERFERING IN LOCAL TRADE UNION ISSUES, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT TAKE ANY LEGAL ACTION AGAINST HIM.

+THEY ARE CLEVER IN CARRYING OUT THEIR ACTIONS BUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS FOR OUR WORKERS NOT TO FALL INTO THEIR TRAP,+ HE SAID.

HUMAN RESOURCES MINISTER DATUK LIM AH LEK SAID RECENTLY THAT COLLINGSWORTH, WHO ENTERED MALAYSIA ON THE PRETEXT OF WANTING TO DO RESEARCH, IS BELIEVED TO HAVE INSTIGATED THE ILLEGAL STRIKE BY WORKERS OF HITACHI CONSUMER PRODUCTS (M) SDN BHD.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID FOREIGN TRADE UNION LEADERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, ENCOURAGED WORKERS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO SEEK UNREASONABLE SALARY INCREASES AND STAGE STRIKES BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO INCREASE THE COST OF PRODUCTION OF GOODS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SO THAT THE GOODS OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE.

CITING SOUTH KOREA AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THESE FOREIGN TRADE UNION LEADERS SUCCEEDED IN INSTIGATING WORKERS IN THAT COUNTRY TO STRIKE AND IN THE PROCESS, AFFECTED ITS EXPORTS. -- MORE
2253MST 25 06 90

0088

R E212 A A E
GSP-HAHATHIR 3 ARAU

HE ALSO SAID THAT CERTAIN TRADE UNION LEADERS WANTED TO SET UP A NATIONAL UNION FOR ELECTRONICS WORKERS TO REPLACE THE CURRENT IN-HOUSE UNIONS BECAUSE THEY WANTED HUGE FUNDS FOR THEIR POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

THE PRIME MINISTER ADVISED LOCAL WORKERS TO GIVE PRIORITY TO LONG TERM INTEREST AND NOT MAKE EXCESSIVE SALARY CLAIMS WHICH COULD FRIGHTEN OFF INVESTORS.

HE SAID MANY INDUSTRIALISTS FROM TAIWAN AND SOUTH KOREA INVESTED IN MALAYSIA BECAUSE OF LOW LABOUR COSTS AND IF LOCAL WORKERS MADE EXCESSIVE SALARY DEMANDS, THEY WOULD INVEST IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT AT PRESENT, MANY WORKERS FROM THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY TOOK UP JOBS IN THE ELECTRONICS SECTOR DUE TO BETTER SALARIES.

IF THE COMPANIES MADE PROFITS, THE SALARIES OF WORKERS WOULD INCREASE NO MATTER WHERE THEY WORKED, HE SAID. -- BERHAHA

2254MST 25 06 90