

5pc of public sector shares for workers

By Ahmad A. Talib

PASIR GUDANG, Fri. 4
The Government guarantees that five per cent of shares of public sector companies will be sold to their workers upon privatisation.

It also guarantees that the workers will not be paid salaries and allowances less than what they were earning before privatisation.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this at a Press conference at the end

of his one-day visit to Johor Baru today.

The Prime Minister said the shares will be sold to the workers at their offer price.

Among the services earmarked for privatisation are National Electricity Board, all ports and Proton.

The Prime Minister earlier told a large gathering of Barisan Nasional supporters, Government servants, private sector workers and people at the Pasir Gudang town centre complex that workers

should not do things that might jeopardise this effort.

He said while efforts to ensure that workers were adequately paid would continue to be made, the Government and the private sector should co-operate to maintain low production costs.

The Prime Minister said those workers whose companies had already been privatised were currently enjoying better salaries and fringe benefits.

The gathering was attended by a large group of

factory workers, some of them displaying banners urging the Government to do its best to defend Malaysia's GSP privileges.

Asked to comment on his closed-door session with Johor Umno at Pusat Islam, Dr Mahathir said it was an opportunity for him to remind party workers to work hard to ensure a 100 per cent BN victory in the coming general election.

He said it was important for the people to vote for the party rather than for individual candidates.

"God willing the Barisan

Nasional will win again," he said, adding that he was happy with the party machinery and preparations in the State.

Throughout his visit, he was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, Public Enterprises Minister Datuk Napsiah Omar and other State dignitaries.

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Dr Mahathir had lunch at Kampung Pasir Puteh, near here, where he also officiated at the opening of a religious school.

He was also asked to comment on the joint tourism promotion programme by Johor, Singapore and Indonesia in the "golden triangle" of Batam.

He said Malaysia was keen to proceed with the exercise.

He said the area had big potential but this development would partly depend on the maintenance of good relations between the three countries.

Dr Mahathir, however, declined to comment on the PBS manifesto which among others called for the return of Labuan to Sabah, other than saying that this was up to the people of Sabah to decide.

Earlier in his speech, Dr Mahathir said the strong unity among Umno members in Johore augured well for the party in the coming elections.

The co-operation among component members of the BN was another factor which lent support to his belief that it would be returned in the polls.