

U GE 19-08 00161 EF758

rae

Mahathir

bm

(Embargo: For release after 9.30pm)

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mhathir Mohamad has again urged the people not to demand for higher wages blindly. Higher wages would only be meaningful if this did not cause a rise in prices, he added.

If wages were to be meaningful then productivity should outstrip the rise in wages, the Prime Minister said at the 25th anniversary dinner of Public Bank Eerhad here tonight.

+The Government of Malaysia does not lack sympathy for workers but the government must take into account the country's economy as a whole,+ he said.

The Government's strategy was to increase employment opportunities as much as possible to the extent that demand for workers would outstrip supply and this would cause employers to compete for workers by offering them higher wages.

+This is already taking place,+ he added. -- more

♥19/08/20-49MST

U GE 19-08 00156 EF753

aae

Mahathir 2 Kuala Lumpur

He said workers could strike and make demands and destroy an industry if they did not get what they want but a business which had been damaged would be difficult to restore and in the final analysis workers would stand to lose.

+Going on strike is not the way to resolve problems and this method had proved that it could destroy a country's economy. If the economy is destroyed, workers' income will also be destroyed,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said the world at present opted for negotiations and compromise in resolving problems and no one can deny that this is the best way.

+If negotiations failed then the best alternative is arbitration and the decision should be accepted by both parties,+ he said.

However the arbitrator should be fair and take into account the future of the business. -- more

♥19/08/20-59MST

U GE 19-08 00109 EF760

aae

Mahathir 3 Kuala Lumpur

An arbitrator who made decisions after only taking into account the rights of workers with whom he sympathised would cause costs to rise and inflation to set in and he in fact would not be resolving the problem, the Prime Minister said.

An increase in the cost of living would give rise to more demands and lead to uncontrolled inflation like in certain countries because of politicians aspiring to be popular and by misplaced sympathies, he said.

As such the Prime Minister urged everyone to refrain from any action that would jeopardise national development.

-- Bernama