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NURTURE INDUSTRIAL HARMONY, MAHATHIR ADVISES WORKERS

Mahathir - workers

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded workers against resorting to industrial action and disrupting industrial harmony which serves as a vital incentive for investment.

The Prime Minister said the government's investment incentives were not confined to monetary incentives and infrastructure but depended more importantly on political stability and industrial harmony which was closely associated with workers.

Workers' claims should be made through consultations, and if that method failed then they should be tackled through arbitration, he said.

+Threats and tests of strength are primitive methods,+ he said when opening the 12th general meeting of the Malaysia Airlines Employees Union (MASEU) here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said resorting to threats, confrontation and strikes might have been appropriate during the industrial revolution in the past when employers exploited workers and there was no legislation to control them, and also when the administrators themselves sided with the employers. -- more

♥07/09/13-52MST

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Mahathir - workers 2 Kuala Lumpur

Cautioning that industrial action would be detrimental to workers in the long run, he said workers should be looked after well, and more so where the success of a venture hinged on their services.

+In a democracy such as Malaysia where political parties depend on the majority of votes to win elections, the government cannot ignore the interests of workers,+ he said.

He also said that acting in fairness did not necessarily mean taking the side of workers. It also meant looking after the interests of employer and investors so that they could provide employment, and workers were not left in anxiety and did not hate the government.

The Prime Minister said that at a time when enterprises and businesses were owned by the people through shares, the prices of shares played an important role in increasing capital.

+The stock market is very sensitive. One has only to hear of a problem in a company and the share price drops drastically,+ he said, adding that this would ruin business especially when it was taking off and required additional capital input. -- more

♥07/09/14-37MST

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Mahathir - workers 3 Kuala Lumpur

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said non-progressive companies would not be in the interest of workers, particularly in terms of promotion and wages.

The government's strategy was to encourage investments to create jobs to the point where there would be more jobs than the number of workers, which would lead to salary increases in the scramble for workers.

+Higher salaries, however, should be matched by greater productivity of our products and services cannot compete and bring in profits.

+And without profits, the company will collapse and workers will lose their jobs,+ he said.

While entrepreneurs could be generous, they would not invest in the name of welfare because they needed to make profits, to top up investments, create more jobs, conduct research and have something to fall back on during a recession.

He said the government encouraged the formation of in-house unions to give workers the opportunity for self-consultation, and not because the move would serve the interests of the government or employers. -- more

♥07/09/15-28MST

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Mahathir - workers 4 Kuala Lumpur

The prime minister said having in-house unions would hopefully make workers more responsible by avoiding any action that could make their company less competitive.

He dismissed allegations that the government encouraged the formation of in-house unions to erode the powers of national workers' unions.

He said while strong unions could force employers to increase workers' salaries, +power corrupts+ and the fall of the British economy at one time was caused by union leaders who thought only of their own power.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir criticised local national union leaders who were more concerned about their political positions and parties than the welfare of workers.

+If British workers' unions could destroy their country's developed economy, couldn't a similar or worse fate befall a developing Malaysia if the union leaders become too powerful?+ he asked.

The prime minister said he was glad that since MASEU's formation 12 years ago, it had not had a major dispute with the MAS management as any misunderstanding was amicably resolved. -- more

♥07/09/15-47MST

CNS0135

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Mahathir - workers 5 (last) Kuala Lumpur

He said that as the national carrier, MAS was owned not only by its shareholders but also the country and its people.

+When MAS succeeds, all Malaysians can feel proud. And those who bring about the success, whether the ordinary workers, management or board of directors, should be commended and given both moral and material rewards,+ he added.

+I am confident the MAS management will not disappoint its workers,+ Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

He wanted MAS to maintain its high quality of service because nobody would stand to lose because of good service.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said some giant international airlines had failed recently because their managers and workers had put personal interests above those of the passengers and the airlines. -- Bernama

♥07/09/15 04MST