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MAHATHIR SUGGESTS CHANGES IN ILO TO SAFEGUARD INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Mahathir-ILO

KUALA LUMPUR, June 5 (Bernama) -- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) should undergo changes to safeguard the interests of developing countries like Malaysia, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said this was necessary to ensure member countries, especially developing ones, benefitted from the affiliation to the international body which currently was dominated by the developed countries to serve their own interest.

+If the ILO is not beneficial to us, then what's the point of being in the ILO,+ Dr Mahathir told reporters after hosting a tea party for victorious Thomas Cup players and officials at his residence here.

+I agree with (Human Resources Minister) Datuk Lim Ah Lek's stand,+ he said, referring to Lim's call at ILO conference in Geneva yesterday for a revamp of the ILO to give more say to the developing countries on its policies and practices.

Lim also called for a review of the ILO conventions passed at numerous ILO conferences to ensure its suitability. --more.

▼05/06/20-17MST

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Dr Mahathir said the ILO, due to its domination by the developed, was unable to understand situation in poor countries:

The developed countries had pressed for wage increases in Malaysia and other developing countries so that it led to increase in production costs and thereby making their goods less competitive, he said;

Asked whether Malaysia would consider leaving the ILO, Dr Mahathir said that if Malaysia were to quit the ILO, the developed countries would still continue to pressure Malaysia, including instigating for a boycott of its goods.

+They will still twist our arm simple because they don't agree with what we are trying to do for Malaysia.

+Whether we get out, or not, it doesn't matter. But; we are worried, about the effect on the workers, + Dr Mahathir added. --more.

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+I would like to make this clear that at; a developing country, the only comparative advantage that we have is our lower cost of labour. Not cheap labour but lower cost of labour.

We don't have the expertise, knowledge for market, technology know-how and capital. . . now they (the developed country) want to make sure we don't have even this advantage so that we cannot industrialise,+ he Said.

In this context, Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed with Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) leaders for failing to see the self-interest tactics deployed by the developed countries.

+Those leaders in MTUC only care of becoming union leaders and having the power of union leaders.

+They don't care whether the people get job or not. That is why they are siding the in ternationals,+ he said. --more

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He said that unlike the government that had worked very hard to create jobs for the people, the MTUC failed to make any contribution.

+The MTUC leaders have done nothing, absolutely nothing to create jobs,+ he Said, adding that all they care for was the workers' membership, not welfare of the worker!; like the government did.

At the on-going ILO conference, the MTUC was seeking the ILO's support to force the Malaysian Government to allow a national union for the 120,000 electronics workers in the country.

Over the years, the MTUC had also influenced several international organisations into pressuring Malaysia on claims that it had failed to comply to international labour standard;; --more

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On the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Dr Mahathir said his address would stress on the need for every nation to share the responsibility of saving the Earth.

+I 'll speak on the Same thing .. more or less,+ he said.

The Prime Minister had repeatedly said the need for the North to provide financial assi Stance to 'the South on preserving the Earth and for developing countries to be accorded its sove'ignity to undertake development projects .

-- Bernama.

▼05/06/21-11MST