

# Quality of work vital, Dr Mahathir tells unions

By Ahmad A. Talib

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said trade unions should not only concentrate on bread and butter issues. Instead, they should also seek ways to improve their members' quality of work.

The Prime Minister added that they should be sensitive to the hopes and aspirations of the *rakyat*.

"The *rakyat* cannot be played around with and they should receive immediate service, given with one's best ability and with utmost courtesy," he said today.

His speech read out by Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek at the opening the 19th delegates' convention of the Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs).

Dr Mahathir said the needs of the *rakyat* would not only vary but would also

increase.

The *rakyat* would not just accept anything without questioning it. This showed that the people were making their own decisions and were also outspoken, independent and clever.

This must be understood by employees, especially those who dealt directly with the *rakyat*.

Relations between public sector workers and the *rakyat* must always be close and continuously nurtured so that the Government's nation-building efforts and the *rakyat's* interest would proceed smoothly.

Dr Mahathir said he was unhappy that a small group of civil servants did not do their work well.

This, he pointed out, had disappointed the people whom they served. This was reflected in the letters published in the newspapers.

These included complaints on potholes, garbage

disposal, medical services and public transportation.

Even though these complaints might appear trivial, they affected the lives of the *rakyat*.

Dr Mahathir reminded the civil servants to extend their services in the same way that they wanted others to serve them.

He said workers should also be alive to issues affecting the community and the country.

In this aspect, trade unionists should educate their members on various aspects of social development, economic matters, productivity, consumerism and the environment.

Dr Mahathir said: "We don't want Malaysian workers to be left behind in their efforts to try and understand these issues which are important to help the country move towards industrialisation.

"These issues, particular-

ly the environment, market economy and consumerism are becoming more important in influencing the development of any nation in the remaining years of this century and the next," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also unhappy with the attitude of some irresponsible trade unionists who compromised their members' interest with that of their own.

He said these unionists preferred politics rather than managing the unions and this made them relegate national interest to the bottom of their priority list.

It was now time for trade union members to scrutinise the attitude of these workers so that they could check their leaders' behaviour vis-a-vis the interests of the workers and the nation, Dr Mahathir said.