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Mahathir-NJC

PM URGES UNION LEADERS AND PEOPLE TO PRACTISE MODERATION

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants the people, especially union leaders, to maintain their moderate attitude, which he said has been the key to the country's success.

The Prime Minister said today that the people could take pride in their success, considered by many nations as extraordinary.

Although the salaries of workers in developed countries, like in Europe, were higher than the Malaysian workers; the living standard of Malaysians was better than theirs, he added.

Our success is the result of the moderation practised by our people, particularly workers, he said when launching the new structure of the National Joint Council (NJC) here.

This is the fruit we are tasting because of our moderate attitude. As such, we should maintain this attitude, he added. -- more

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Mahathir-NJC 2 Kuala Lumpur

The Prime Minister said this attitude had also ensured political stability and brought about rapid economic growth.

Under the new NJC structure, the five NJCs in operation since 1979 were replaced by three NJCs; for the Management and Professional Group, for Science and Technology for the Support Group, and for General Workers for Support Group.

This is to streamline the NJCs with the New Remuneration System (SSB), the salary and service scheme for government servants which came into force this year.

The NJC, comprising government officers and public sector union leaders, is a mechanism for discussing issues relating to salaries and terms of service.

Dr Mahathir also touched on the industrial action resorted to by workers in developed countries to back claims for pay hike, and the racial riots highlighted by the mass media, saying these incidents had caused political instability and economic decline in these countries.

The people, including union leaders, should take these incidents as a lesson not to be too emotional when fighting for their claims, he added. -- more

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+Thank God, Malaysians are not violent or emotional, and always use common sense and know how to practise democracy, + he added.

Dr Mahathir reminded unions to act maturely and cautiously in demanding for any salary increase because a pay rise that resulted in more expensive goods would be meaningless.

The government would not deny the workers salary increases as this was their right but it wanted to ensure that any pay hike would not reduce the competitive edge of the 'country 's products and was accompanied by higher productivity, he added.

Citing an example, Dr Mahathir said the goods produced by European countries had not been as competitive because of high product on costs brought about by high salaries.

He said the govern&t implemented SSB in order to be fair and to boost productivity in the civil service.

+Previously, salary increment (annual ) was automatic... whether that, person is good or not. . . even those in 'cold storage' get theirs, + he said.  
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SSR provides for varying annual increments based on performance, with the excellent workers getting the biggest amount and non-performing staff remaining static on their pay scales.

Dr Mahathir said he was aware that some public sector union leaders were unhappy with the new structure of the NJC but it had to be introduced to bring the NJC forum in line with current needs.

He urged government officials and union leaders represented on the three NJCs to cooperate with each other to ensure the smooth running and effectiveness of the NJCs.

Some union leaders of statutory bodies and local authorities disagreed with the new structure because it abolished the NJCs for Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities. They have boycotted the new NJCs.

At the ceremony, the Prime Minister presented letters of appointment to members of the three NJCs from the official side.

The staff side representatives were appointed on June 25. -- Bernama

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