

Dr M: Help curb inflation and maintain competitive edge

Jobs will be protected

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By Farush Khan

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The Government will oppose any attempt to disrupt the country's economic development which could result in loss of jobs for Malaysian workers. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said. The Prime Minister said all Malaysian workers and trade unions should support the Government in this exercise. They should also help the Government to curb inflation and maintain the current relatively low cost of living.

Dr Mahathir said this in his Workers' Day message.

"By doing this, we can maintain our ability to be competitive in the international market, help improve workers' needs and raise their income levels in a healthy manner."

Workers should stop for a moment to ponder their contributions to national development amidst the changes taking place in and outside the country.

"When their interests are threatened, their relationship with workers of developing countries is meaningless."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had introduced Malaysia Incorporated to develop the country through everyone's co-operation.

"It is clear that a country's progress will bring benefit to the people of all levels. An under-developed and poor country cannot possibly bring benefit to anyone."

In a developed country, the workers' income must increase according to its progress.

"We have proven our capability in developing the country. It has now become the 19th best industrial country in the world, though it is small when compared to other industrial countries.

"With rapid development, the workers' income has increased. This is because of more employment opportunities to the extent that there are now more jobs than workers," he said, adding that

Workers should think deeply about the changes and take steps to adapt to them effectively, especially in a developing economy like Malaysia. "A successful Malaysia means that its workers are also successful."

He drew attention to efforts made recently to reduce the competitiveness of the country's export products.

"The proposal to fix the minimum salary for the world made by developed countries was clearly to raise the production cost in developing countries like Malaysia.

"If our cost increases, certainly our goods cannot control the world market anymore. This will cause the industry to move to developed countries and our workers will be unemployed."

The proposal has been supported by workers of developed countries.

their income would further improve if the country's trade improved.

He was confident the country's trade, especially in exports, would increase if its goods could compete with those of other countries. This is possible if productivity improves.

He said that in the last few years, political and community ideologies had changed and the focus was now on economic development through a free market system.

An economic system planned, implemented and controlled by the central government has lost its credibility.

The communists had admitted that their system had failed to bring about the promised "workers' paradise". The socialists had also admitted that their ideology could only bring about poverty.