

TEACH WORK SAFETY, SAYS PM

By K. PARKARAN and HAH FOONG LIAN

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed yesterday called for the inclusion of occupational safety and health studies in schools and institutions of higher learning to help create a "healthy and safety-conscious" workforce.

The Prime Minister said this should be done formally or otherwise in view of the adverse social and economic implications if the

people lacked such knowledge.

He said there was a dire need for Malaysians to be educated in the two fields in the country's march towards developed nation status.

"Occupational safety and health should not be compromised in the nation's eagerness to attract foreign investments," he said when launching the National Occupational Safety and Health Campaign here. Also present was Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek.

He said the lack of safety measures could cause industrial acci-

dents which would result in heavy losses and affect productivity.

"This would in turn raise the cost of our goods and affect their competitiveness in the international market," he said.

Apart from higher costs, the quality of products would also be affected as injured workers would not be able to give their best.

Dr Mahathir said equipment, material and technology brought into the country should be safe and recognised by the international community.

"I wish to urge all foreign investors to include safety features

when transferring their technology," he said.

He regretted the attitude of some developed nations which imposed their labour standards on developing countries when Malaysia was striving to improve occupational safety and health standards.

"They are linking the social clause to labour standards with international trade.

"It is not our intention to exploit our workers but the clause only serves to increase production cost without bringing much benefit to workers," he said.

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