

# PM: More investments will ensure higher pay

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SEREMBAN, Sat. — The Government's strategy in ensuring higher wages for workers is to attract more investments thereby creating more job opportunities for the people, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said unlike other countries where workers resorted to industrial action to obtain higher pay, the Malaysian Government believed that it was better to encourage investments and expedite industrialisation.

"Through industrialisation we can provide more jobs for the growing population. Factories will clamour for workers and employers will be willing to offer higher wages. This is our strategy," he told more than 3,000 people, including State Barisan Nasional supporters at the opening of the Nestle Foods factory in Chembong, about 30km from here.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, Nestle (M) Bhd chairman Jen (B) Tan Sri Mohd Ghazali Seth and its managing director, Datuk Frits Van Dijk.

materials with the assistance of consumers should not be forgotten.

He said Malaysia had become an important market and would continue to be so, in the future.

He said Nestle, which was among the largest food processing companies in the world, had set up five food manufacturing plants estimated to cost RM275 million in several Asean countries.

He said the plants in Asean had led Nestle S.A. of Switzerland to transfer technology for the first time to the people in this region.

The plant is the realisation of the Asean Industrial Joint Venture project.

To maximise the use of local cocoa, Malaysia was selected to produce Kit Kat chocolate wafers and Smarties chocolate dragees under the Asean scheme.

Nestle has invested more than RM100 million in the Chembong factory which is equipped with state-of-the-art machinery and uses hi-tech manufacturing process.

Dr Mahathir also opened the 300-room Allison Klana Resort hotel here.

He said the completion of commercial projects ahead of schedule benefited not only the developers but also the Government.

Dr Mahathir and his wife were accompanied by about 1,000 Barisan Nasional supporters on motorcycles from the Pedas weighbridge station to the factory.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia did not want industrial action as it would not benefit the employers and workers.

He said industrial action would result in reduced productivity and an increase in the prices of goods which would lead to inflation.

He said the workers would then lose out despite obtaining higher wages (through industrial action).

"This is why in Malaysia we encourage workers not to take industrial action. Instead, the Government attracts investments to increase job opportunities, which in turn leads to higher wages."

He said industrialisation was important as the population in Malaysia had increased and the nation could no longer rely on the agricultural sector to provide adequate job opportunities.

"For instance, in agriculture, only one or two people can work on an acre of land, but with industrialisation, scores of people can be gainfully employed on the same piece of land."

Dr Mahathir hoped the people would understand

the Government's industrialisation programme and support it wholeheartedly.

"This will attract more investors to the country."

He said goods produced by local workers were on par with imported products.

Earlier, in view of the large turnout of residents, Dr Mahathir, who said he wanted to take the opportunity to address them before proceeding to his official speech, told the crowd that it was obvious that they were already vigorously campaigning for the coming general election.

"I am confident the spirit will not decline," he said,

adding in a lighter vein that he did not know when the polls would be held but it would be before the end of next year."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysian workers should realise that the key to greater development was the use of modern and sophisticated technology.

"Therefore, we should be brave and willing to learn the latest technology available today. Those who are not willing (to do so) will not be able to compete and this will not benefit employers and will result in unemployment."

He said the Government gained when projects became operational through revenue collection while the entrepreneurs made profits from their businesses.

He praised the resort's developer, Peladang Kimia Bhd, which had completed the project well ahead of schedule.

Dr Mahathir said there was a close relationship between the Negri Sembilan Government and the Federal Government and this had enabled many projects to be implemented in the State without any hitches.

"The State Government must always provide a conducive investment environment to attract investors."

He said there was rapid development in the State following the Federal Government's decision to build the KL International Airport in Sepang.

Allson Klana Resort is 45 minutes' drive from Kuala Lumpur and conveniently located along the routes to and from Malacca, Singapore and major industrial zones nearby.

The hotel has six restaurants, entertainment outlets and a bar as well as six conference rooms. The Grand Klana Ballroom can seat up to 1,000 guests.

Later, Dr Mahathir attended a closed-door luncheon with senior State civil servants at the resort.

Dr Mahathir urged companies to emphasise on research and development.

He said that R&D should be viewed as normal and compulsory investment which would bring profits in the long term.

He congratulated Nestle (M) Bhd and Golden Hope Plantation Bhd for their R&D efforts in producing cocoa beans that were capable of competing with the best from other countries.

Dr Mahathir said while appreciating the modern technology brought into the country, efforts of suppliers of primary commodities to increase the quality of raw