

# PM: Improve quality, productivity

By K.P. Waran and Shariff Haron

PONTIAN, Fri. — Improvement in the quality of products and services offered by Malaysia and upgrading of workers' productivity will help determine whether Malaysia could attain the developed nation status within its target date, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians should therefore place stronger emphasis on improving quality and productivity which would help catapult Malay-

sia into the ranks of an industrialised nation sooner.

He said improving quality and productivity would also contribute to bringing more foreign exchange for products exported by the country which would in turn increase the income of the workers.

"Our quality standards are already high. But inculcating a quality culture will help us attain many of our development targets quicker," he told the crowd at the Pontian mini-stadium during a meet-the-rakyat session.

He said competition in the

international market was getting stiffer with more and more countries attempting to penetrate the arena. Success, therefore, would be limited to those who produced better goods than their competitors.

He said Malaysia had reached 19th position in the world in terms of overall trade which surpassed the US\$100 billion (RM256 billion) a year figure and added that this was commendable especially since the country was placed ahead of many other nations with populations far exceeding Malaysia's 19 million.

"Our position can be further improved if Malaysians take up the challenge to work harder and produce goods and services which are better compared with those offered by other countries.

"The Government is willing to provide the incentives, the infrastructure and the planning to ensure Malaysia produces higher quality goods but the onus is on the people to work harder to meet this target."

He said while workers in other countries had to resort to strikes and industrial action to increase their

wages, Malaysians had the opportunity to work harder which would make the nation's investment climate even better.

He said attaining developed nation status in 2020 would mean the people would have a fair share of the economic pie and wealth.

He said the Government's policy of combating inflation and keeping prices of goods at a low level would ensure the people would have money to buy more

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## PM confident people will make right choice

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goods in comparison with some developed countries whose per capita income were high but this was undermined by high inflation.

Dr Mahathir also urged the people to retain the Barisan Nasional at the next general election since the Government policies and programmes have benefited both the nation and the people.

"There is no reason to change when the people are benefiting from the Government's policies.

"On the other hand the carefully laid out programmes and policies will be disrupted if there is a change.

"I am confident you all are wise and would make the right decision when election is called whether it is next month or anytime after that," he said adding in

jest that election would definitely be called before December.

At the function Dr Mahathir also presented machinery to small-scale entrepreneurs and gave grants to the winners of the Beautiful Village (*Kampung Indah*) contest.

Despite threatening dark clouds and a slight drizzle the people of Pontian gathered at the open air stadium three hours earlier to give the Prime Minister and his entourage a rousing welcome.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, Youth and Sports Minister Ghani Othman, Law Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar and deputy ministers.