

Balance drive for profit with social duty, firms urged

By Azran Aziz

PEKAN, Thurs. — Companies should not be solely geared towards making profits but must strike a balance between business interests and social responsibility, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said firms should also emphasise on providing employees with incentives, including housing.

"Employers are responsible for their workers' welfare and accommodation is a basic requirement to workers, especially those who come from outstation.

"The progress that we are pursuing is also one which is balanced and does not discard the harmonious family concept," he said when launching Taman Perdana, the Automotive Manufacturers (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd (AMM) staff housing development project in Peramu Jaya.

The project comprises 16 single-storey bungalows, 218 medium-cost houses, 56 low-cost houses, three apartment blocks of 24 units each and 10 blocks of flats which cost between RM34,000 and RM95,000. There are also four bungalows to house visitors to the plant.

Situated approximately 2km from the company's assembly plant, the price of the houses are kept low compared to those charged by private developers to ensure a wide spectrum of the employees can own them.

Dr Mahathir later handed house keys to 10 selected workers.

Earlier, the Prime Minister toured the AMM plant and launched the new Proton-Citroen variant production line.

He commended the AMM for its initiative in providing housing to its workers near the plant and described it as a healthy development which showed that the management cared for the welfare of its workers.

"I hope the workers will be receptive to these facilities which augur well in the efforts in making Pekan an automotive town. I also hope that workers, who bought the houses at a low

Car plant poised to increase output

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price, will not sell them for monetary gains," he said.

He said they should work extra hard to make AMM a giant in the automotive industry, especially since the industrial sector in Pahang was growing at a rapid pace.

"The Pahang Government, with little support from the Federal Government, has succeeded in developing the industrial sector in the State.

"The automotive industry, for example, has seen excellent progress compared to my last visit a year ago," he said.

He said local people were benefiting from the existence of the automotive industry in Peramu Jaya.

"The industry is progressing so well that not only factory buildings are put up, but also housing for workers are provided," he said.

Last year, the AMM plant

produced 600 cars per month but production had since doubled and it is poised to increase further.

"This is something that Pahang people should be proud of and for AMM workers, it should motivate them to increase productivity and contribute to efforts in making Malaysia an industrialised country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the country managed to achieve the feat of exporting cars

because its people were willing to learn various new technologies, work hard, be disciplined and work with one another.

Present at the ceremony were Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob, his deputy Datuk Hasan Arifin, AMM chairman Datuk Seri Yahaya Ahmad and Proton managing director Datuk Mohd Nadzmi Mohd Salleh.