

Accept changes,

**By Manan Osman
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SUNGAI PETANI, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Hicom Holdings Berhad's employees must accept the recent changes in the company and to adapt to new management policies.

He said the workers must adapt to the new work culture that might be introduced by the new management to ensure efficiency and profitability.

With the transfer of share holdings in Hicom following the purchase of 32 per cent of the company's shares by Datuk Seri Yahaya Ahmad recently, evidently he would be managing the company, Dr Mahathir said.

"Naturally, when there is a takeover, there would be some changes to improve efficiency."

Dr Mahathir said being an individual, Yahaya could not afford to lose unlike the Government which could absorb some losses.

"Therefore, workers will have to adapt to the new situation to ensure success," he said when addressing workers of Hicom Petro-Pipes Sdn Bhd's factory at the Ria Industrial estate.

Some 150 workers of the factory had earlier pledged to work hard and ensure the Government's Vision 2020 is realised.

Also present was Yahaya who is Hicom president and

Hicom Petro-Pipes chairman.

The RM100 million production plant, which will be producing gas pipes for the local oil and gas industry, is expected to begin production before the end of the year.

Presently, all Malaysia's requirements of line pipes for the Peninsular Gas Utilisation (PGU) project are imported from Japan, Europe and the United States.

The factory located on an eight-hectare site has a capacity of producing up to 100,000 tonnes of grade line pipes per year for the domestic and export markets.

It is purportedly the most modern and up-to-date spiral pipe manufacturing plant in the world.

Dr Mahathir also stressed the importance of upgrading existing skills and technology so that the products could also be exported to enable the country to earn foreign exchange.

He said since the country aspired to become a fully industrialised nation, all efforts must be geared towards that end.

Earlier, addressing about 2,000 people at the Motosikal dan Engin Nasional Sdn Bhd (Modenas) plant in Gurun, about 20km from here, the Prime Minister said the national motorcycle, scheduled to roll off the line before the end of next year, would be for both local and foreign markets.

However, he said the first

200 units of the motorcycle would be exhibited to the Malaysian public during next year's National Day procession.

He said for Modenas to penetrate the export market, it had to be competitive in terms of quality.

Dr Mahathir, who was briefed by Modenas chief executive officer Rashid Din on the progress of the project, said he was happy with the development since he officiated at the groundbreaking ceremony four months ago.

With an investment of over RM300 million, the plant, which is expected to be ready by the end of February next year, will initially be producing the 110cc four-stroke engine model.

The initial production target is 100,000 units per year and will later be increased to 350,000. It is expected to provide over 1,000 jobs.

Dr Mahathir also advised the people of Gurun to extend their co-operation in ensuring the success of the project and not to be influenced by outsiders who were out to mislead them.

In obvious reference to environmentalists, he said the group always opposed development — "cannot cut trees, build roads and hold Lima (Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition)", although they themselves had never done anything positive.

Hicom staff told