

12 DEC 1996

Perwaja-Employee

PERWAJA EMPLOYEE'S SPONTANEOUS SHOW OF SUPPORT

By: Mohd Arshi Daud

CUKAI, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- A foreman with Perwaja Steel Sdn Bhd was so touched by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's plea for employees to help in efforts to revive the firm that he stood up spontaneously after the Prime Minister's speech and pledged total support for the cause.

Many people, including the Prime Minister and Terengganu Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, were taken aback by the incident which occurred when Dr Mahathir had just finished addressing employees of the debt-ridden company at the auditorium of its steel complex here.

Anang Abdul Rahman, 37, a foreman at the water treatment division, said he was moved by what the Prime Minister said, including his impassioned plea for workers to rally behind the new management's resolve to lift the company out of its doldrums.

Anang said when he started working with Perwaja 12 years ago, he was single but is now married with five children and in a way, owes his livelihood to Perwaja.

Before a packed audience comprising employees, guests and journalists in the auditorium, he said Perwaja was not a Malay dilemma but an unfinished struggle, in reference to a recent poem by the Prime Minister on the unfinished struggle of the Malays.

Anang, who was about 10 yards away from Dr Mahathir, said he would fully support efforts to revive Perwaja and at this juncture, Anang's colleagues backed him up with shouts of "kita boleh...kita boleh (we can...we can)".

In response, Dr Mahathir flashed a smile while Perwaja's top management, who were sitting beside the Prime Minister, were seen talking to each other, apparently asking about the background of the worker. --

BERNAMA

AD MR YBY