

30 APR 1999

Mahathir-Workers

INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has called on workers to continue to increase productivity to help the economic recovery of the country.

They should not be choosy about jobs at times when the country is trying to revive its economy even though the wages are not like the good days.

"We are competing aggressively with other countries and success will depend on how high is our productivity.

"If we fail, the effect will be felt by all including the workers. On the other hand, if our productivity increases, the success will also be shared by all," he said in his message to mark the Workers Day which falls tomorrow.

Dr Mahathir also wanted the workers to continue to be discipline and adopt good work ethics besides giving attention to work quality.

"We are grateful to Allah SWT because the workers in this country do not face major problems like retrenchment on large scale in several other countries," he said.

The Prime Minister said the situation was the result of the immediate and firm measures taken by the government to stop attempts by certain people to destroy the Malaysian economy.

"Now, thanks to the cooperation of all including the workers, the measures taken by the government have shown positive effects," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government was always concerned with the problems of the workers and had taken steps to safeguard their interest at times when the country was facing economic problems.

These included intensifying construction projects and infrastructures as economic activities in the construction sector would directly provide employment opportunities, he said.

"With employment opportunities available, the people will not feel the pain of the effects of a weak economy which we are still facing," he said.

The Prime Minister thanked the workers in the country for understanding the problems facing the country by not resorting to irresponsible actions and making economic recovery efforts more difficult.

"We see in countries of frequent industrial actions by the workers demanding wages beyond the means of their employers, further aggravating the problems and situation," he said.

Under such a situation, with frequent currency fluctuations and inflation, increase in income would be meaningless because of less purchasing power, he said.

On the contrary in Malaysia, Dr Mahathir said that although wages did not increase much, the workers' cost of living were not much affected due to the stability of the ringgit and low inflation.

The number of retrenched workers and unemployed was also small and there should not have been unemployment because there were plenty of jobs as reflected by the presence of many foreign workers in the country if only Malaysians were not that choosy, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government wanted the workers to earn more through increased productivity because it helped to develop the country's economy.

"Each time a person spends, another person will make profit. The profit is then spent and another party including workers will benefit.

"The more frequent the money changes hands, the better will be the

economy," he said.

He also praised the workers unions for "industrial peace" in Malaysia and this would directly help the economic recovery of the country as it enhanced confidence of foreign and local investors.

--BERNAMA

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