

PM: This is in response to workers' reaction

Nst 18 APR 2001

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the decision to allow contributors of the Employees Provident Fund to decide their quantum of contribution was made in view of their reaction towards the recent reduction of their contribution.

“There are some people who are not happy (with the reduction) ... and they want to picket. Why picket? If they don't want to contribute, say so and if they want to pay more, just say so,” he said when speaking to reporters after opening the International Islamic University Malaysia in Gombak today.

The Prime Minister said the Government could not stop contributors from contributing higher than the present rate to the EPF.

“If they want to contribute more, we cannot stop them because we

have a provision in the EPF allowing them to do so. If the contributors feel that they want to contribute 11 per cent or 12 per cent, that's fine,” he said, adding that the Government would not be affected by the contributors' decision to contribute nine per cent or higher.

However, Dr Mahathir was sceptical whether many would want to contribute higher than 11 per cent.

He said many would not be happy if the Government decided to increase their contribution to 15 per cent.

“Sometimes they (contributors) demand to withdraw more than we have allowed ... (they are allowed to withdraw) to buy computers but they never use it to buy computers ... just give them the opportunity to withdraw and they would withdraw,” he added.