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Getting more non-Malays to join armed forces

MALACCA, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today steps will be taken to encourage more non-Malays to join the armed forces.

Dr Mahathir said it was possible non-Malays were put off by the salary structure.

"Of course, we just cannot take people in only as officers or give salaries higher than the others," he told a Press conference after attending a gathering known as Perhimpunan Perdana Warga Gerak Khas 2001 at the Sungai Udang army camp.

"In some countries, the Governments impose national service where everyone has to serve in the armed forces, but we do not do this here (in Malaysia)."

Asked about a second attempt by the major powers to colonise developing countries through globalisation which he mentioned in his speech at the function, the Prime Minister said:

"I read in today's NST that they (World Bank) have realised that what I said over two years ago on the matter (was correct)."

He said this was admitted by the former chief economist of the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz.

"What was done by the World Bank in the selling of government assets can be interpreted as bribery."

In the process of selling, Dr Mahathir said some leaders of developing countries would get part of the money for themselves. "So, it's encouraging corruption."

On the decision by the Malaysian Trades Union Congress to proceed with a picket on May 12, Dr Mahathir said:

"What can we do ... I don't know what can be obtained from the picket, except for tension in relationship which is not beneficial."

He said he did not know if the MTUC felt that by picketing, the Government would meet its requests.

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