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MTUC told to reconsider picket

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MALACCA, Sun. - The Malaysian Trades Union Congress has been asked to reconsider its plans to stage a picket on Saturday over the Employees Provident Fund issues.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said Malaysia was scheduled to host the Asian Labour Minister's meeting this week and that the picket could undermine the nation's image.

"Therefore, I urge MTUC to think of the country's reputation and honour which would be at stake should they go ahead with the picket.

"Furthermore, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to attend a gathering of workers to honour their contribution to the country on May 12.

"Therefore, MTUC should take all this into consideration before going on with the decision," he said.

Fong hoped the MTUC would give the Employees Provident Fund an opportunity to improve itself.

He said he had met with the MTUC delegation on Friday and discussed matters on improving EPF's administration.

"Possibly MTUC and EPF have their differences, however, they need not resort to a picket over this."

Asked to comment on Dr Mahathir's suggestion on the non-Bumiputera being encouraged to join the armed forces, Fong, who is also MCA vice-president, said the party had been holding talks to convince members of the Chinese community to join the forces.

"The talks are not limited to only entering the armed forces but also encouraging the people to join the teaching profession," he said, adding it was important all races be represented in the armed forces to show their patriotism towards the country.