

Malaysia's stand on Indons clear: Dr M

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Country does not need too many foreign workers, says PM

MALACCA, Fri: Malaysia's stand in not taking in any more Indonesian workers is clear even if the Indonesian government appeals against the decision.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed said today the decision is appropriate as there are already sufficient legal workers here.

"We do not need any more Indonesian workers. We already have more than enough ... we cannot accept more," he said after officiating the 20th World Customs Day celebration and unveiling the department's new logo at the Royal Customs Academy here.

He was commenting on a report that Indonesian Vice-President Hamzah Haz will appeal against Malaysia's stand in sending home Indonesian workers.

Mahathir said Malaysia does not need too many foreign workers as there are no more jobs for them.

"What are they going to do here then?" he asked.

He said the *pemutihan* method in dealing with illegal workers does not solve the problem as most of them come with the idea that they will go through the process and be automatically legalised.

The government will have a massive operation in sending home the workers, especially those without work permits, but

it will be conducted in phases as there are too many of them.

On a separate matter, Mahathir said there will be no introduction of new taxes in the near future.

"However, with the advent of the Asean Free Trade Area and World Trade Organisation, the government has to reduce import duty even though that is the government's source of income.

"Therefore, we need to think of other methods in solving the situation," he said.

Mahathir also said there are no plans to privatise the customs department just yet.