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PM: I need a salary raise too

JITRA, Fri. - The suggestion that the Government should raise the salaries of civil servants resulted in the Prime Minister complaining that he too, was in need of a pay rise.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was responding to a member of the audience in his dialogue with Kubang Pasu district civil servants here, said in jest that he sometimes felt it was unfair how his monthly salary was only RM16,000 when his subordinates earned more.

The member of the audience asked why teacher's salaries seem to be raised faster than the rest of the civil service.

Dr Mahathir said some of the people who called him "boss" (tuan) such as Petronas chairman and chief executive officer Tan Sri Hassan Marican earned RM50,000 a month.

"Do you think my salary is fair, when I work 24 hours a day, sometimes 25 ... they should give me more, just a little bit more, maybe RM16,500, because it's so unfair as others are getting more," said Dr Mahathir in jest, to the laughter of those present.

"The point is that we cannot complain over what we have, but we must instead have a sense of satisfaction in doing our job," he said.

Citing an example, Dr Mahathir said with his experience as a former medical officer in Langkawi, satisfaction came from seeing the development on the island.

He said that was the reason why he visited the island so often.

He said salaries had been increased 10 per cent last year and this year.

"We hope that this question of not having money will not arise anymore.

"This is because no matter how much we raise salaries, it would still be inadequate," he added.

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