

Dr M: Develop an inquiring mind

NSunT 4 NOV 1984

PASIR GUDANG, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged Malaysians to develop "an inquiring mind" if they really wished to make a success out of the transfer of technology being vigorously pursued by the Government.

They must also prepare themselves through reading up materials connected with new technology available.

He said it was pointless to say that others were not being sincere in transferring technology, "although I do think that there is insincerity on the part of others".

Opening the rolling stock manufacturing complex at the Malaysian Shipyard and Engineering (MSE), here, Dr Mahathir said:

"For us to succeed in the transfer of technology, we have to study carefully all the work that is being carried out, ask all kinds of questions and constantly refer to literature.

By G. DANAPAL

"It is also vital for us to study and record down all that has been taught to us, including the engineering designs and the like."

He said preparation also meant research, jotting down all that was being taught, including engineering designs.

"It is also vital for us to continue with the study of the "state of art" from other sources as well, so that ultimately we will be able to come up with an essay or a thesis for publication in a professional journal."

Determined

The Prime Minister stressed that technology would be transferred only if we have made the necessary preparations to receive it.

Referring to the Japanese and the Koreans, he said before they acquired the technology, they encountered even bigger problems.

The Western nations

did not even want to transfer their technology but "the Japanese and the Koreans were a determined lot and were able to succeed."

He said there were Western nations which even now have imposed conditions restricting the transfer of technology when exporting their products.

"The Government can urge, and impose conditions on foreigners forcing them to transfer technology but unless we are prepared and willing to face the obstacles and problems, we will not succeed."

The question that we have to ask is, if others can acquire technology from foreigners, why could not we?

Expressing satisfaction over the success achieved by the rolling stock manufacturing complex at MSE, he said the Government had in 1978 proposed to MSE to study the possibility of

going into the construction of railway wagons and coaches.

He said he was happy that MSE had taken up the challenge and succeeded in its efforts through a joint-venture with the Korean Shipbuilding and Engineering Corporation.

It was the Government's intention to improve and modernise the railway system so that "this mode of transport will be efficient, safe and reasonable in fares."

Research

"Plans to modernise the railway service are being considered by a committee and it will involve a number of phases, including replacing ageing wagons and coaches with new ones, like those constructed at MSE."

He said research and development for the improvement of "this new industry" was vital, just as in the case of other industries, such as high technology industries, airline, pharmacy and transport.

In this context, he hoped there would be more firms which would give emphasis to research and development, the allocation for which was rather small, both by the public and the private sectors.

"Although allocation of funds and other facilities are vital for research, we must not overlook the human factor which requires dedication, determination and creativity."

"The Government has introduced tax incentives to enable the private sector to carry out research and development, and the Government hopes in years to come both the public and private sectors will increase their involvement in research, especially in research that is in line with national industrial strategy."

This would mean research on industries based on local resources like rubber, wood and oil palm would be encouraged.

He said at the moment these industries were using foreign technology.