

High quality, competitive pricing the only way: PM

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HIGH quality products and competitive pricing is the only way for Malaysian companies to penetrate the international market successfully, especially in an increasingly protectionist world trade environment.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government can resort to protecting the domestic market to ensure competitiveness even if this means facing criticism and counter actions from other countries but for the international market Malaysian manufacturers and exporters have no other choice but to compete.

"Malaysia probably still has the competitive edge in terms of labour costs but if the quality of products is low then this will not guarantee success in the international market," he said at the presentation of the 1990 Prime Ministers' Quality Award in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said in

its effort to become fully developed, Malaysia will have to face stiff competition from the rest of the world.

To ensure quality products, the Prime Minister said the workforce in the country need to be disciplined, responsible and ever willing to learn and adopt new technologies.

In this competitive world even the concept of quality control has changed. In the past, products which do not meet the standards were thrown away but now companies are striving for total quality control.

"Total quality control and company-wide control should now be practised. Under this concept not only the production workers need to ensure their products are of high quality but managers at all levels need to maintain quality management too.

"Zero defect is not something that is impossible to achieve. Nevertheless, this does not mean

that once zero defect products or standards are achieved the quality of work cannot be improved further," the prime minister said.

He added that the public and private sectors need to be more committed in their work to achieve higher levels of quality management and products.

"We need total, company-wide and nationwide quality control. Quality should be emphasised in our services, management and also products," he said.

In addition, the Prime Minister said "the customer is always right" attitude should be inculcated and adopted. If workers strive hard to meet the customers needs then the chances of them marketing their products successfully is even greater.

He said employees should not be satisfied with their high performance level but work harder so that even higher efficiency levels can be achieved. — *By Azam Aris*