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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 (Bernama) -- Malaysia should venture into and lead in research to produce goods suitable for use in tropical countries, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said Malaysia had good research facilities and capable researchers.

Speaking at dinner to mark the 15th anniversary of the Standards and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia (Sirim) here, he said most of the goods in use today were the inventions of researchers from countries with colder climates.

The goods produced were influenced the climatic conditions and were thus not suitable for use in tropical countries.

Malaysia should lead the other countries in this research, he added. -- more

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+The time has come for us to think of producing goods suitable for tropical countries,+ he said.

He said Malaysians should also have a curious nature because this would spur them to get to know about more things.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also said the good quality of Malaysian products should continue to be improved so that the quality of life of the people would also continue to be upgraded.

+Good quality does not mean achieving quality at that level only, but should be improved from time to time so as to achieve excellence. We should not be satisfied with the quality we have now.

+Good quality is quality that is accepted today and not in the future whereas the quality today is better than that in the past,+ he said. -- more

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The Prime Minister said he was proud of the achievements of Sirim which had conducted research and fixed the standards for goods because standards were needed to ensure that goods of the same type had the same quality so that consumers were not cheated.

He also hoped Malaysians would discard the notion that imported goods were of better quality than goods made in the country because such notion was not true.

He also suggested that the word +standard+ be used in place of the word +piawafan+ because +standard+ was easier to say and had been in use for a longer time.

At the function the Prime Minister launched the +Quality+ promotion on the +MS+ (Malaysian Standard) mark which will be aired on radio and television and in the cinemas.

The promotion, jointly conducted by Sirim and Shell Companies Malaysia, is aimed at increasing awareness among Malaysians of the quality goods with the Malaysian standard.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also presented Sirim awards to 25 companies which had produced high quality goods while Science, Technology and Environment Minister Law Heng Ding presented licences to use the Sirim mark and quality system registration, laboratory accreditation and quality improvement certificates to various companies. -- Bernama