

PM calls for more technology inputs

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PENANG, Fri. — Malaysia will have to concentrate more on aspects of technology, systems, research and development as well as human resources development if it is to meet Vision 2020 objectives, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

As a "technology-importing" country, Malaysia will need effective channels for the transfer of technology.

And if these processes of transferring technology are effective, the chances of Malaysia reducing the technology gap that now exists between Malaysia and developed countries will be good.

Dr Mahathir said this when opening the new \$5 million Robert Bosch (Ma-

aysia) Sdn Bhd Research and Development building in the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone.

He said words like "networking" and "symbiotic relationships" are often heard now and that in general they imply the need for excellent inputs of technology, systems, research and development, and human resources development.

"There is no doubt foreign investment has played a major role in the development of the country's economy, initially as contributor to additional capital and also as a catalyst for local investment.

"Foreign investment has brought in technology and new processes which has directly changed the coun-

try's economic structure towards value-added activities.

"As such we must think of new strategies and approaches instead of the old approach of attracting foreign investment."

Malaysia must realise that the reshuffling of the world geo-political scenario since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact could jeopardise Malaysia's position as a suitable place for investment in the 21st century.

The competition for foreign investments will become stiffer with the existence of new locations which may be more competitive in terms of production cost — like Vietnam, China,

the Eastern European countries, Mexico and the Latin American countries.

He also called on government agencies, like Sirim and Mimos in particular together with local companies in general, to double their efforts in research and development so that these efforts would meet the country's requirements in the 21st century.

Also present at the opening were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Chief Minister Dr Koh Tsu Koon and his deputy Dr Ibrahim Saad, former Chief Minister Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu and a member of the Worldwide Bosch board of management, Dr Martin Saelzer.