

Be innovative, PM tells manufacturing industry

By ZULKIFLI TALIB

SHAH ALAM: The manufacturing industry must be bold and innovative to develop and improve on newly-acquired technologies, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed.

"The success of technology transfer largely depends on the enthusiasm, ability and commitment of those involved directly in the fields concerned," he said when launching the PHN Industry Sdn Bhd at the Shah Alam industrial area.

He said industries or individuals acquiring new technologies should keep up with the latest devel-

opment in their respective fields.

"The user of such technology must also be bold and innovative after mastering it (the technology)".

PHN is involved in stamping and sub-assembling car metal parts and components. The company supplies 276 loose stamped metal parts and 115 assembled parts to Proton.

Dr Mahathir said those who restrict themselves to conventional methods would not be able to develop and would always be dependent on others for technology.

He said technologies bought from others were

always dearer than home-grown ones and that one could not expect full technology transfer to be effected.

"It is unrealistic to expect others to use 100 per cent of their technology," he said.

"Likewise, we will only give what we are prepared to give, and this can be seen in the advancement we made in the cloning of rubber and oil palm as we will not give all."

Dr Mahathir said emphasis must also be given to research and development efforts to help the Malaysian manufacturing industry.

"Investment in research and development

should be treated as part of the capital to seek higher returns," he said. "Those who invest in this field will not only have a headstart in their fields but will also gain higher profits, including the sale of the homegrown technology."

He said most industries do not give priority to research because they wanted bigger profit margins.

Dr Mahathir said current R & D efforts in the manufacturing sector were small compared with the agricultural sector.

About 93 per cent of the allocations used for R & D were organised by the

public sector with three-quarters being in the agro-based industries, he said.

In comparison, in Britain only 10 per cent of R & D efforts were undertaken by the public sector with 96 per cent concentrated in the manufacturing sector.

He also reiterated the need to create a highly skilled workforce to provide quality work.

He said that this factor would be the added attraction to lure foreign investors and increase investments in the manufacturing sector.