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Mahathir-supplement (With pix)

PUBLICISE MALAYSIA, MAHATHIR TELLS CORPORATE SECTOR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed the hope that the corporate sector play an active role in publicising the country's positive assets overseas to attract more foreign investments.

The Prime Minister said they should give testimony to the actual situation in Malaysia in the true spirit of Malaysia Incorporated.

"We should tell the world that Malaysia is an attractive centre for high technology-based industries and that Malaysia is a good technological partner for their continued competitiveness," he said when launching a special supplement on Malaysia in the worldwide edition of Scientific American.

The special edition of the widely-read magazine, on the theme "Malaysia Technological Competitiveness Towards 2020" in April next year would focus on Malaysia's technological capacity and capability. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said efforts should also be made to inform the world that Malaysia could provide other benefits and incentives, skilled and scientifically-competent manpower and a workforce with a positive work culture.

He pointed out that there were many fiscal incentives offered to companies for upgrading technical capability of workers and for product development as well as for the more basic type of research and development (R&D).

"The government is also removing restrictions on the employment of foreign R&D personnel and technical experts although it pays to employ Malaysians as they are equally competent and cost less," he said.

Dr Mahathir expressed full support for initiatives to publicise Malaysia's technological capability and capacity which had been a well-kept secret.

On the prosperity of Malaysian operations of multinational companies while parent organisations faced problems in their home countries, he said he suspected it had something to do with the overall Malaysian business environment. -- more

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Another reason for the success, he added, was the high productivity of Malaysia's labour force based on the trainability and technical competence of the workforce.

Dr Mahathir said his vision of producing a scientifically progressive society by the year 2020 was not a pipe dream as the importance of science and technology in development had been recognised since independence and enshrined in the Rukunegara and incorporated in the educational programme.

"By that time, Malaysia will have a society that is not only a consumer of technology but also a contributor to the scientific and technological civilisation," he added.

To encourage further technology development, the Prime Minister told leaders and representatives of the private and public sectors attending the launching that the government was preparing the Industrial Design Act to be tabled in Parliament.

"Thus, the intellectual properties of Malaysians and foreign investors alike are protected, paving the way for the orderly transfer of technology to Malaysia," he said. -- more

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With the Act, foreign investors could bring in their technology freely, safe in the knowledge that their technology was protected in the country, he added.

The Prime Minister said steps had also been taken to assist in the commercialisation of scientific discoveries so as to nurture the development of indigenous technology which he hoped would play an important role in giving Malaysian industry the competitive edge.

"Political stability and well-developed financial mechanisms are among the most important conditions for industrialisation to flourish. In Malaysia, both of these conditions have been accorded high rating by world opinion," he said.

Scientific American President and Chief Executive Officer John Hanley said the supplement on Malaysia, which he hoped would be ready as early as March, would coincide with the magazine's golden jubilee.

The two-page spread supplement in colour, focussing on the interdependence of science, technology and business, would cost US\$36,400.

The monthly magazine, with a circulation of 600,000 worldwide, is priced at US\$3.95 per copy.

This is the second time Malaysia would be featured in an international magazine after a special feature on Vision 2020 by Newsweek magazine last January. -- Bernama

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