

Be innovative and inventive, urges Dr M

NST - 4 JUN 1993

By Vijayan Menon

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Foreign investors can bring their technology into Malaysia freely knowing that it is protected, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The protection is provided for under the Patent Act which was passed in 1986 while the Industrial Design Act is being prepared for tabling in Parliament.

The Prime Minister said since the intellectual property of Malaysians and the foreign investors were protected, this paved the way for the orderly transfer of technology to Malaysia.

He said concurrent with the development in science and technology, Malaysians were encouraged to be more innovative and inventive.

Dr Mahathir said the Government and the non-governmental organisations were inculcating such an innovative culture by holding several activities including the annual Inventors' Fair.

"Malaysian investors took part in the recent Geneva exhibition. Out of the six entries, five won medals including one gold medal.

"These efforts to build the scientific and technological infrastructure and competent scientific manpower are to ensure science and technology-based industries

succeed in the country.

"These industries reflect the level of Malaysian technological capability," he said at the launch of a special supplement on Malaysia's technical capacity and capability in the worldwide edition of *Scientific American* at the Dayabumi Complex here.

The special supplement *Malaysia: Technological Competitiveness Towards 2020* is scheduled to appear in its April 1994 edition.

Dr Mahathir said steps were taken to help in the commercialisation of scientific discoveries to nurture the development of indigenous technology which, it was hoped, would give the Malaysian industry an edge.

"One of the steps taken is the establishment of the Malaysian Technology Development Corporation which seeks to assist in the commercialisation of research and innovations developed in the country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said steps had been taken to prepare Malaysia not only to be a contributor to new technologies and scientific discoveries.

"The Government, through its funding programme via the Intensification of Research in Priority Areas, has provided a substantial fund for research in the universities and re-

search institutes.

"Further strengthening of this development is facilitated by the provision of policy guidelines such as the Industrial Master Plan, the Technology Action Plan and Vision 2020.

"The national research and development allocation is being increased, with an anticipated doubling in the proportion of Gross Domestic Product between 1990 and the year 2000 (from 0.8 per cent to 1.6 per cent of GDP)," Dr Mahathir said.

He said with this development, not only had new knowledge been generated but highly trained personnel had and were being produced to man the high technology-based industries.

Several examples, he said, may be highlighted to indicate the level of sophistication achieved using local expertise. For instance, a majority of Intel Technology Corporation's most advanced microprocessors were assembled and tested in Malaysia using automated equipment and processes designed, fabricated and integrated locally.

"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.