

Play a more active role, private sector urged

NST 17 AUG 1993

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The private sector should play a more active role in the development of science, technology and research to help create a Malaysian society which is more knowledgeable in these fields, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said while the Government continued to increase efforts to promote development in these fields, the private sector could also play a more prominent role.

Speaking at the Malaysian Invention and Design Society Exhibition (Mindex) dinner and the launch of the Noval Smart Lamp here, he called for concerted efforts to upgrade technological development to ensure it was on par with the economic progress of the country.

"All research and development (R&D) need not be limited to high-technology fields but should be more comprehensive and include all levels of production. In-

novation in production technology is necessary in all types of industries."

Dr Mahathir said R&D should be implemented in line with demands of both local and foreign markets and added that efforts to commercialise an invention need to be made part of the management skills to ensure that it did not become a mere "academic exercise".

Although Malaysia was a leading exporter of manufactured goods not enough

items were locally invented which could be linked with a Malaysian identity, he said.

He hoped small companies and large corporations would endeavour to upgrade the quality and value of locally produced goods and added that the time had come for local manufacturers to accept international standards as national standards.

He said the label "Made-in-Malaysia" affixed on goods should become a guarantee of high quality to consumers all over the world.

He expressed confidence that Malaysia had the capability of developed countries in many fields and cited the local invention, Noval Smart Lamp, which won an award at an international exhibition in Geneva as an example of Malaysian creativity and ability.

He said through Mindex, Malaysia had managed to unearth creative talents and

hoped the organisation would continue to expose more hidden talents.

In his speech at the dinner, Malaysian Invention and Design Society (MINDS) president Tan Sri Dr Augustine S.H. Ong said a National Inventors Foundation had been set up to intensify science and technological development.

He said this was the latest effort on the science and technological field to assist those who fulfilled certain requirements.

Ong, who also heads the foundation, said it would seek contributions from the corporate sector and society.

Ong later received a mock cheque for RM500,000 from Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding being the ministry's contribution to the foundation.

The ministry was the first contributor to the foundation which has been registered as a charitable body.