

Continue to strive for excellence, private

PM: Don't be

Dr. M.

13 NOV 1993

By Manan Osman

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised both the public and private sectors not to be complacent in the wake of the encouraging economic indicators but to continue to strive towards excellence.

He also stressed the importance of the private sector defending its competitive advantage in the international market.

He said any competitive advantage being enjoyed now would only be temporary and would be quite difficult to maintain.

"Therefore, continuous efforts must be made to improve and upgrade our competitive edge," Dr Mahathir said at the presentation of the Industrial Excellence Awards here today.

He added that there was no end to the process of innovation.

He said in the past year, numerous international indicators had pointed to Malaysia's encouraging economic achievements. Malaysia's growth rate of three per cent a year in the early '90s was among the highest in the world.

Dr Mahathir said last year, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) had reported that Malaysia was placed 23rd among more than 100 GATT members in terms of export performance.

These successes, he said, were the result of the concerted efforts of the Government and its administration and the private sector supported by a determined workforce which was also highly dedicated and disciplined.

"However, we should not be too proud of such indicators to the extent of becoming complacent. If we are

not careful, our performance will decline before our potential is fully exploited," he added.

Dr Mahathir also said that excellence was an intrinsic value that must exist in all sectors, including the private sector.

He said the excellence of the private sector was especially needed in the international arena because export was the major contributor to the nation's earnings.

Dr Mahathir said the private sector must also be more innovative and should always find new products to be marketed and adopt new approaches for any particular task.

He said a new expertise which could be exported would be in the field of construction — road construction, buildings, housing, telecommunications, and the management and design of hotels.

"Many countries which aspire to develop faster have recognised Malaysia as the technical and planning source to achieve their objective as soon as possible," he said.

He said the Government realised that while encouraging the private sector to upgrade its degree of excellence, the Government machinery also needed to be more creative and dynamic in providing the necessary support.

In line with this principle, the Government had introduced various measures to help the private sector improve its performance.

Last year, the Government, with the co-operation of a number of local companies, had set up the Malaysian Technological Development Corporation which provided the capital for research institutions to intro-

PLEASE TURN TO
PAGE 5, COL 1

complacent

and public sectors urged

Council to spearhead designing activities

FROM PAGE ONE

duce their innovations. It also provided capital to technological-based companies to increase their competitive edge.

He said that in June this year, the Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation was launched to help strengthen Malaysia's export performance.

He said the Cabinet had also approved the setting up of a National Design Council to co-ordinate and spearhead the country's designing activities so that the country's industrial products would be more competitive in both local and foreign markets.

A design centre would be set up under the council to act as the focal point for all such activities, he said.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Chua Jui Ming, later visited an exhibition held in conjunction with the award presentation.