

# Excluding women will curb progress, says Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Excluding women from the trading and industrial sectors may retard the smooth implementation of Government development programmes, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

Women's participation in enhancing the country's economy was extremely important, especially since they had suitable business acumen, he added.

The country also needed all Malaysians to contribute their energies and skills in ensuring the success of its development.

"If women are excluded and do not contribute their energies, half of our workforce will be lost.

"Therefore, we need to mobilise their energies directly and closely," he said at the presentation of *Potential Women Entrepreneur* award 1993 at the Shangri-la Hotel organised by *Peniagawati*, the Bumiputera Business and Professional Women's Association.

Dr Mahathir acknowledged that there were certain jobs and professions which better suited the skills of women as compared to others.

He said the modern belief that women must do everything that men did for the sake of equality was unacceptable.

The Prime Minister said there were some vocations which were still the domain of men, although women could participate in them.

He cited the engineering field as such an example.

Dr Mahathir said the participation of women in this field would help fill workforce requirements.

He also advised women entrepreneurs to acclimatise themselves with modern market requirements, and added that women were also generally more disciplined and careful in managing their finances.

This, he said, would contribute to their success in their ventures.

He described Peniagawati's efforts to set up branches in States to provide more opportunities for interaction among members as a wise move.

He said the association's selection to represent the country as an affiliate of the Women's World Entrepreneur Association reflected its high rate of achievement and capability.

Four women were selected as winners of the *Potential Women Entrepreneur* award.

They are Farmasi Dew Ma (M) Sdn Bhd owner Rosenah Mohamed; managing director of Sipro (M) Sdn Bhd Noraini Soltan; owner of Sweet Touch Ceramic Rohana Abdul Rahman, and co-owner of The Body Shop Mariam Sulaiman.