

# PM: Develop quality workforce

KUALA LUMPUR: ~~Dauk~~ Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the development of the values and attitudes of the country's manpower must become a necessary component of all training programmes.

"An integral part of competence is social competency, and this has to be emphasised because it touches on our core value system," said the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir said the quality of workforce was essentially the decisive element in a country's road to economic success and prosperity.

"Improving the quality of the workforce is, in a nutshell, what human re-

source development is all about," he said when opening the German-Malaysian Institute, a joint-venture training programme between the two countries, here yesterday.

Also present was German Economic Co-operation Minister Carl-Dieter Spranger.

Dr Mahathir said the Government placed strong emphasis on human resource development as the population represented the nation's ultimate resource.

Under the Sixth Malaysia Plan, about 13 per cent of the Federal Government development budget had been allocated for education and training.

This, he said, was a relatively high proportion of development expenditure, and compared very favourably with all international standards.

Dr Mahathir also said that employers, workers, schools, training institutions, unions and parents were key players besides the Government in the education and training of the country's workforce.

On the GMI, he said, it should consider creating linkages with institutions of higher technical education offering degree-level education for their graduates to enhance their education and skills.

Such linkages would also strengthen the prac-

tical and industrial exposure of the engineers who graduated from these institutions, he added.

Speaking to reporters later, he said Malaysia would welcome Germany's participation in making the country a regional centre for higher education.

He said he had spoken to Spranger on the possibility of having twinning programmes between German universities and other institutions with Malaysia.

In an immediate response, Spranger said his government would study the suggestion and find the suitable institutions in Germany for the purpose.