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Mahathir - livestock

COMMERCIALISE LIVESTOCK BREEDING, CALL

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 26 (Bernama) -- The Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) plans to develop the livestock sector on a commercial basis, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said today.

Thailand and Indonesia could provide the land and labour while Malaysia the technological expertise to develop the sector on a joint venture basis, he said when launching the centenary celebrations of the Malaysian Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Services at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

He said apart from chicken and pig rearing, other animals and birds should also be reared on a commercial scale.

With modern technology, Malaysia could produce deer, ducks and a cross between chicken and quail on a commercial scale, he said.

"Livestock breeding on a small part time scale is no longer suitable and will not ensure a steady supply for the increasing population," the Prime Minister said. -- more

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Farmers practising old methods would be left behind and would not be able to compete in the open market.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of which Malaysia was a signatory would have profound implications on livestock farmers and international boundaries could no longer afford protection to inefficient industries, Dr Mahathir said.

"Competitiveness is the most suitable weapon in the more liberal open market. Livestock farmers should be bold and accept new technology and make bigger investments," Dr Mahathir said.

Malaysia's livestock output last year was valued at more than RM3 billion and its export value exceeded RM500 million.

The Prime Minister also said people involved in the education sector particularly in the field of veterinary and animal husbandry science should lead and be ahead of developments and not remain mere followers of progress. -- more

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Dr Mahathir reiterated that to become a developed country, Malaysia should emerge as a producer and inventor of technology.

"We cannot continue to remain the users of other people's technology. Our scientists should be more aggressive in their research. We should boldly venture into new fields applying science and logic," he said.

Old assumptions should be reviewed and people should view things from a new angle, Dr Mahathir said.

"Our competitive edge, our resilience and our status in this world depend on our ability to think in a more creative way," he added.

Speaking to reporters, Dr Mahathir said many in Malaysia wanted to go into the property line or become share brokers rather than grasping the opportunities in other fields such as commercial livestock rearing. -- more

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At the function, Dr Mahathir also launched the new logo of the Veterinary Services Department, a book on the history of veterinary development in Malaysia and commemorative stamps to mark the centenary celebrations.

The book is written by Director-General of Veterinary Services Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Mustaffa Babjee.

Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid and Dr Ahmad also spoke at the function attended by about 2,000 people including cattle farmers. --

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