

Accept new technologies to compete, Dr Mahathir tells livestock breeders

By Farush Khan and Alex Choong

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — The country's livestock breeders must be prepared to accept new technologies and make bigger investments or they will lose out on the open market, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Launching the Veterinary Services Department's 100th-year celebration here, the Prime Minister said breeders who kept to "old ways" would not be able to compete with those from other countries.

"The new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will have major implications for the breeders and country barriers can no longer protect ineffi-

cient industries," he said.

Dr Mahathir said competitiveness was the most appropriate weapon in a bigger market and to be able to compete, the breeders must accept new technologies and invest more.

He also spoke on the need for Malaysia to become a technology inventing and producing country to achieve its ambition of becoming a developed nation.

"We cannot remain as a user of other people's technology. Our scientists must be more aggressive in their research. We must dare to explore new areas with more scientific and logical approaches," he added.

Dr Mahathir said there was no obstacle which could stop brave and creative thinking. "Our com-

petitiveness, resilience and our position in this world depends on our capability to think more creatively," he said.

Dr Mahathir called on those involved in education, particularly in veterinary science and medicine, to pave the way for development rather than be complacent followers.

He said skilled manpower which the country had produced was no longer for the 20th century but for competition in the 21st century.

He said the Government was impressed with the development of the country's veterinary industry.

The production of chicken, eggs and swines was not only sufficient but was enough for export, he said,

adding that this was made possible through the sacrifices of the department staff.

Dr Mahathir hoped their contributions and efforts would continue towards helping the country achieve the objectives as set out in Vision 2020.

He said the country's population would increase and the role of breeders as suppliers of basic food would become more important.

However, he said, the number of breeders would drop from time to time.

"The time has come for us to make animal breeding, other than chicken and swine, a commercial-orient-

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Reactive types of services 'outdated'

FROM PAGE ONE tated industry," he said.

He said animal breeding on a small-scale and part-time basis was not suitable any more and could not guarantee supply for the ever-growing population.

The Prime Minister said the roles of the department staff would continue to change along with other developments and the reactive type of services would become outdated.

"The department's second century will definitely be more challenging. The changes now are occurring at a faster pace than that experienced during the past generation. So, you must be more pro-active by using the latest technology," he said.

He said the people expected the department to ensure that the food supply from livestock was always sufficient.

As such, he reminded the department to make sure that the food supply, locally produced or imported, was clean and safe for consumption.

After the speech, Dr Mahathir pressed a button and unveiled the department's new logo. It showed on the giant screen the letters V and M which stands for *veterinary* and *Malaysia* respectively.

He also launched a book, "History, Development and Prospects of the Animal Industry and Veterinary Services in Malaysia" and the commemorative stamps for the centenary celebrations.

He then opened the International Animal Industry and Agriculture Show at the Dewan Tun Razak 1 at the Putra World Trade Centre here.