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Mahathir-Medicine

PHARMACEUTICAL PLANTS SHOULD ENSURE PRODUCTS ARE ORIGINAL

SERI ISKANDAR, Perak, May 15 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian pharmaceutical products manufacturing industry should ensure its products are original and are of high quality to ensure their effectiveness, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the pharmaceutical industry should attain the stipulated standard as consumers expect the medical products they bought to be 100 per cent original.

"I wish to see local medicine find a place in this country as traditional medicine indeed has its curative effects on patients," he said when opening the Safire Pharmaceuticals (M) Sdn Bhd factory here.

Nevertheless traditional medicine should undergo the right tests to ensure they had the required effect on patients, he said.

Before the coming of western medicine, the people used traditional cures but because the local medicine had not gone through the necessary tests people were not accepting them well, he said.

Traditional medicine should undergo blind tests that is it should be used by over 100 or 1000 people to determine their effectiveness, Dr Mahathir said.

This would ensure that traditional medicine sometimes sold at the roadsides without being certified by the authorities was actually medicine and not flour, he said.

"If it can be made certain that traditional medicine is good then it will be acceptable if not it will be rejected and dismissed as medicine sellers trying to sell their own concoctions," he said.

This was in contrast to western medicine which had become accepted and readily available.

"Hence the local pharmaceutical industry should engage in organised and orderly production of medicine so that patients will not be duped," he said.

The Prime Minister also noted that certain people used ordinary water in bottles and claimed it was magic water (jampi) that could cure even cancer.

"This is no good practice," he said.

If what is claimed is true they should test it on some 50 people and if it could cure them, well it could be accepted, he said.

It was sad there were people who resorted to this method to earn money and in the end cause the death of people, he said.

"No one could cure others by just using jampi and as a trained doctor I cannot accept such methods," he said.

The Prime Minister hoped the local pharmaceutical industry could expand particularly that using herbs as many types of medicine could be made from such herbs.

Syarikat Safire Pharmaceuticals (M) Sdn Bhd a Bumiputera owned company is located at the Pharmaceutical Park here.

It is jointly owned by the Perak Development Corporation and a married couple -- both doctors Dr Safri Nawawi and Dr Hamimah Idrus.

Dr Mahathir also witnessed the signing of an agreement between the company and the United Kingdom firm of Peter Black Toiletries and Cosmetic Limited for the joint setting up of a plant in Kuala Lumpur to produce cosmetic and cleansing products for the Asia-Pacific market. -- BERNAMA

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