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TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ENHANCES M'SIA'S COMPETITIVE EDGE, SAYS DR M

By: Mohd Fisol Jaafar

TOKYO, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, heartened by continued support by Japanese investors for Malaysia's industrialisation programme, says technology transfer from Japan will enhance the competitive edge of local products globally.

"We appreciate the transfer of technology to companies in Malaysia ... there may be competition in the market, even between joint venture companies and the main companies in Japan, but such competition are healthy," he said at the signing ceremony of a joint-venture agreement between Premier Choice Sdn Bhd, Usra Tampi Sdn Bhd and Metro Denso Ltd of Japan.

The agreement is for the production of combination switches for the automotive industry in Malaysia and for export.

Dr Mahathir, who is here on a two-day working visit, said Malaysia appreciated Japanese companies' willingness to share their expertise in high-technology industrial activity with their Malaysian partners, contrary to belief that Japanese manufacturers were reluctant to share their knowledge in certain fields.

He said the joint-venture formalised today would also help in helping Malaysia overcome the economic difficulties as a result of the currency problems faced by Southeast Asian economies.

He said the co-operation would bring companies in Malaysia and Japan closer.

Dr Mahathir, stopping over in the Japanese capital on his return to Kuala Lumpur after attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) Leaders' Summit in Vancouver, later witnessed the signing of the joint-venture documents by Premier Choice chairman Datuk Wira Mohd Saleh Sulong, Usra Tampi group executive chairman Datuk Abdul Shukor Mohamed and Metro Denso president M. Tanaka.

Usra Tampi holds 51 percent equity in the joint-venture, Premier Choice nine percent and Metro Denso 40 percent. -- BERNAMA

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