

03 APR 1997

Mahathir-Putra

UNIVERSITI PERTANIAN IS NOW UNIVERSITI PUTRA

SERDANG, April 3 (Bernama) -- Universiti Pertanian Malaysia is now known as Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who announced this here today, said the new name was chosen because of UPM's location next to Putrajaya, the new administrative capital within the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Putrajaya is named after first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra.

"Putra also relates to the country's youthful population," he said addressing UPM staff and students preceding a dialogue with them during a one-day working visit there.

The crowd gave Dr Mahathir a thunderous standing ovation upon making the announcement.

Speaking at a packed UPM's Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Hall, Dr Mahathir said a name change for the university was necessary as its role was no longer confined to agriculture.

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Dr Mahathir said the achievements of UPM, which he described as a university set up to teach Malaysians how to plant padi and fish, have made him proud.

"Today we see tremendous progress being made and knowledge gained has contributed to the creation of several products and unique production methods not developed by other parties," he said.

Presently 60 per cent of UPM's 23,000 students follow science courses and the rest, arts and social sciences.

Last year alone UPM won the national award for the best R&D institution, the IT special management award and the Malaysian Computer Industry Award for IT achievement.

The prime minister said application of agricultural products in industries should not be neglected although the country's economy was no longer primarily agro-based.

"We need more R and D on application of agricultural produce and land use to bring about maximum returns," he said.

He called for the use of information technology to increase agricultural output as in future only minimal manpower would be involved in its production which also had to cater for communities in other industries as well.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak was briefed by UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Syed Jalaludin Syed Salim on the university's development.

Dr Mahathir also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UPM and Technology Resources Industries Bhd (TRI) for the establishment of a Post Graduate School of Management.

TRI chairman Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli signed for his company while Dr Syed

Jalaludin represented UPM. -- BERNAMA  
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