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PM: Have classes on morality, ethics to strike a balance

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PETALING JAYA, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad suggested today institutions of higher learning should conduct classes on morality and ethics to strike a balance between technology and good values.

He said he had spoken with foreign academicians on the subject and they agreed with him that the rapid development in technology would give power to those who possessed them.

"But, if they do not balance it with good values, there is a possibility that the technology will be used for negative purposes that can be harmful to society," he said after visiting the Limkokwing Institute of Creative Technology here.

He said this when asked to elaborate on his speech earlier concerning the need for institutions, including Limkokwing, to teach moral values to their students.

Dr Mahathir said technology without morality could be damaging to the people. "The economy and currency problems we now face are due to the development of technology."

The Prime Minister said modern technology permitted the selling of one trillion dollars in currency trading in a split second.

"It should be good for us but unfortunately it is not good for some countries, including Malaysia," he said.

"They merely have to move figures on the computer screens and the actual amount of money they are supposed to trade could amount to a trillion dollars but they could do so without having to move a single dollar," Dr Mahathir said.

Asked to comment on job opportunities for graduates, the Prime Minister said there were many as long as people were not choosy about the type of job and salary offered.

"We should be willing to work even if the qualification does not match the job."

He recalled that the Government had in 1985 provided temporary jobs to graduates. They only worked part-time and did not apply what they had studied and graduated in.

Asked whether the graduates could be employed by the Information Technology sector, Dr Mahathir replied that they could if they had the basic skills.

"Computer study is easy and can be done even during spare time," he said.

The Prime Minister was also asked on the proposal to lift the ban on shortselling of shares in the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.

Dr Mahathir said: "We have to study the proposed move carefully. We often feel that once a situation has returned to normal, we can stop the very thing that has helped bring about the improvement".

He cautioned that the move could cause the problem to re-surface.

"But, we should not be in a hurry to go back to the old method which caused us the problem in the first place."

Security Commission executive chairman Datuk Dr Munir Abdul Majid had commented in Sydney last week that the SC was reviewing the ban on shortselling of shares as the market had stabilised.

Short-selling of shares is where one sells shares he does not own, hoping to buy them later at a cheaper price.

The Government implemented a ban on short-selling in September last year following the regional economic problem which saw prices on the KLSE plunging.

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