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Mahathir-Speech

DR MAHATHIR AMAZED OVER UKM'S ACHIEVEMENTS

BANGI, Sept 9 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed amazement over the achievements of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in the field of technology and felt his prepared speech on research and development for the opening of a UKM joint venture project could be out of date.

"I wrote the speech myself to explain the role of R&D in our country's development," he said.

"The examples I will give are probably old compared to the research being done here (UKM)," the Prime Minister said when opening the UKM-MTDC Smart Technology Centre here.

Dr Mahathir said after he had read and seen the achievements of the UKM and the MTDC (Malaysia Technology Development Centre), he felt the text of his speech could be out of date.

However Dr Mahathir continued with his prepared text and urged local companies to forge closer links and cooperation with local universities to benefit from their research findings and expertise.

He said the people and local companies should have more confidence in the abilities of local universities in inventing something new and provide ample chance for the use of their research findings and inventions.

"The readiness of local companies to use the research findings and inventions of the local people is in line with the Malaysia Incorporated concept we are practising," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he understood there were still many research findings of local universities which had not been transferred or commercialised well by private companies due to various problems such as internal regulations, bureaucracy, financial and other issues.

"There are also several people who are still not open to the changes around them."

They were not so keen on accepting changes for whatever change that occurred in a society they felt would be difficult to handle particularly if the matter required strategic thinking on their part.

The Prime Minister said an amicable solution should be found to reduce the obstacles that were mentioned.

"Hence all three parties, the university, the central agency and private companies should find a solution that was innovative and proactive for these problems," he said.

Dr Mahathir also hoped local industry would provide space to universities to undertake R&D or suitable consultancy work.

Industry should have a positive attitude towards academics and not ignore their expertise.

The Prime Minister urged industry to cooperate with universities such as by accepting students for practicals.

The Prime Minister regretted that there were still many companies which were reluctant to help universities.

Dr Mahathir suggested that the UKM and other local universities expand their post-graduate programmes taking into account the needs of the local industry and the expanding sectors in the country.

"It cannot be denied that orderly and high quality post graduate programmes will contribute to the achievements and research findings of a university."

The UKM-MTDC Smart Technology Centre covered a six-hectare site in the

UKM.

The centre provided suitable space and infrastructure for incubation technology in the field of bio-technology and also in other areas related to cluster technology as proposed in the Second Industrial Master Plan.

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