

09 SEP 1999

Mahathir-Research

MALAY SOCIETY MUST CULTIVATE R&D CULTURE- DR MAHATHIR

BANGI, Sept 9 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Malay community is capable of inventing sophisticated technology and products if they fully nurture the research and development (R&D) culture.

It is not that the Malay community is less clever but it did not have the R&D culture, according to the Prime Minister.

He said eventhough the R&D culture had been sown a bit among eastern people including the Malays and other Bumiputeras but it had not become a part of their culture at present.

"Hence the main point for R&D success is to have the appropriate culture for R&D," he said when opening the Smart Technology Centre (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) Technology Development Corporation here.

Dr Mahathir said the Malays had abundant knowledge which could be developed if they had the full R&D culture.

"What is happening at present is that the Malays who have the knowledge are not only not developing it but hiding it."

"Like the Malay dukuns who have effective medicines but they hide this from public knowledge."

Dr Mahathir said probably they taught their children but did not impart all their knowledge for fear of the student knowing more than the teacher.

Often no one was imparted with this knowledge and it would be lost when the person who had it died, he said.

"Society will not gain any lesson or have any lasting benefit."

"Hence there will not be any continuous research and development on the knowledge the person possessed or invented."

Dr Mahathir said society would not progress in the absence of a culture of making records and systematic writing and documenting.

There would be no expansion of knowledge and not only that it would become extinct and lost from society, Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister said a wide range of products did not bring any return to their inventors because they jealously guarded their invention secrecy.

He said the Malay community need not hide its knowledge or inventions as there were laws which could protect their inventions.

"We also have to acknowledge that others to may have similar ideas."

Dr Mahathir said that the important thing was that the invention should not be at a static level but should be further improved and developed without any limit.

"If it is good, it can be made better. Even though others may copy, we will always be one step ahead by further developing on the invention," he said.

He said the people particularly the Malay community should understand the importance of nurturing and practising the R&D culture.

"Without this culture, probably we will not succeed in development."

Dr Mahathir said Islamic researchers should give attention to things that were suitable for Muslims as the R&D was a wide field which had big potentials.

"So far nearly all the equipment and systems we use are the result of R&D by Europeans living in temperate climates."

"Their inventions are suitable for use in temperate zones."

Some of the products might not be suitable for people in Malaysia which had a tropical climate, he said.

Hence local inventors could come up with items suited to tropical and humid regions or adapt goods invented elsewhere for local use.

For instance cars made for temperate zones if kept in tropical and humid countries such as Malaysia could result in the cars' interior becoming very hot.

"Can we not use paint, glass or other materials or design that can be impervious to heat?"

--BERNAMA

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