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PM talks to UTM students about their responsibilities

SKUDAI, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who received a warm welcome at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia today, told the students that they could develop the country if they understood their responsibilities.

Speaking to a capacity crowd at Dewan Sultan Iskandar, the Prime Minister said students of higher learning institutions were part of the human resources important for a country.

Therefore, he said, it was very important for them to gain knowledge, qualifications, adopt positive thinking and realise the need to compete in the international community.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived in Johor Baru for an overnight visit, also reminded them of the substantial amount set aside by the Government for education.

He was given a loud applause by the lecturers, students and staff as he arrived for the launch of the "Discovery University" theme.

The reception reflected the rousing welcome accorded to him during his visit to Institut Teknologi Mara (now upgraded to university status) in Selangor on Thursday.

As at ITM, UTM students today lined up outside the hall to greet the Prime Minister.

Despite his tight schedule, Dr Mahathir spent almost three hours with the academic staff and students.

He also opened the marine technology laboratory, presented excellence awards to three lecturers who had received international recognition and joined them for lunch.

He said producing a scientific and progressive society was one of the objectives of the country's vision to become a developed nation "in our own way without being influenced by the ways adopted by other countries, particularly from the West."

He said the progress the Government hoped for was one "which is complete" not only physically, but also from the aspects of morality and ethics.

He said a society in a developed country should have skills and scientific expertise, not only to modify but also invent and upgrade technology.

Therefore, he said, UTM's emphasis on "discovery" was a positive move.

The Prime Minister said he was glad to learn that since its inception in 1972, UTM had produced 45,000 graduates in science and technology, particularly engineering.

He congratulated the lecturers for their relentless efforts to produce this "scientific society."

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