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MAHATHIR-PRODUCTS

NO REASON WHY LOCAL PRODUCTS SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, May 22 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there was no reason why locally made household products should be left behind foreign made products when the country was already capable of producing cars of international standards.

"We want other Malaysian products like air-conditioning units, refrigerators, oven and other products to be of equal standards in terms of quality and sophistication with foreign made products," the Prime Minister said when officiating the Malaysia Electric Corporation Bhd (MEC) Distributors Convention here today.

He said the government always encouraged local made products as the people could own it and not depend on foreign goods.

Dr Mahathir said household products were in demand all the time, even as the country was moving into the information technology era.

He said as the people got more rich, demand for these products would also continue to rise even if they own them, as they would be seeking for more modern and sophisticated products.

In view of this, Dr Mahathir said producers of local household appliances should give importance to research and development to increase the sophistication of their products and capability to compete in overseas markets.

"More innovations can be made so that the Malaysian brand products can be equally beautiful or even more sophisticated than products in overseas," he said.

The prime minister added that this was more important as local manufacturers of household appliances would not be able to expect government protection like the local car producers.

He said the manufacturers of locally made household appliances should also venture into overseas markets especially the markets of newly developing countries.

"I see a niche for us to enter, especially in the markets of the newly developing countries, where the people have started getting higher salaries and they can afford to buy more household appliances," he said.

These countries may appear unattractive as the people seem to lack or not into using electrical products but these are the markets with great potentials in the future, he said.

"It is like seeing some countries where people are barefoot. Then you think they don't need any shoes so there is no market or you (could) think this is a good place to sell your shoes.

"So I think we should consider those people who have no electrical appliances. They're going to be richer and they are going to use electrical appliances and we should produce it for them," he said. -- BERNAMA

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