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Mahathir-Research

PRIVATE SECTOR ASKED TO STEP UP R&D

KUALA LUMPUR, April 12 (Bernama) -- The involvement of the private sector and the government in research and development is still at a low level, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"As a country stepping into the development era, all parties should give priority to research and development to improve the quality of local products," the prime minister said.

He said, however, that the government had implemented various initiatives towards this end through programmes under the intensification of research in priority areas, the creation of the National Science Development and Research Council, streamlining of R&D agencies and institutions and development and promotion of R&D among the private sector, research institutions and the universities.

"Besides these, the government, through several ministries and agencies, has provided various programmes, incentives and financial assistance to encourage R&D activities and upgrade manpower skills," he said at the launch of the latest material for tooth filling, silverfil, by Dunia Perwira Sdn Bhd at the Malaysia Technology Park, here.

He said the government had also provided venture capital facilities to create a conducive environment for increasing R&D activities through the Malaysia Technology Development Corporation, a joint-venture company between the government and the private sector to enhance the commercialisation of research findings.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir also stressed the importance of the role of research institutions and universities in stepping up market-oriented research that could be commercialised.

He said knowledge in technology without efficiency in running a business would not make a success of one's involvement in business.

"The vision to make Malaysia a developed industrial nation will not be achieved if we not have sufficient workforce," he said.

He said the need to have abundant technical, experienced and skilled workers was becoming critical with the rapid economic development in the new millennium and the age of globalisation where Malaysia had to compete with other countries in an increasingly competitive world.

"(Malaysian) entrepreneurs must realise that the world is our market now," he said, adding that they had to be more sensitive to changes in the world economic system by looking for markets outside.

-- BERNAMA

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