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Mahathir-Technology

SUPPORT MIGHT'S INITIATIVE IN HI-TECH DEVELOPMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR TOLD

PUTRAJAYA, July 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on the private sector to support the efforts of the Malaysian Industry-Government Group For High Technology (Might) in initiating hi-tech development in various areas.

"If you (private sector) have something you can develop, you can come to the government. We can lend our ears," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that there was a need to have close collaboration between the government and the private sector in achieving new technologies and products.

He said works by Might needed to be supported by industries, universities, the private sector and government agencies like the "Triple Helix Programme" which was introduced to strengthen technology commercialisation effort through closer collaboration among these sectors.

Dr Mahathir earlier attended a special briefing by Might on the introduction of the programme and witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Might and the Multimedia Technology Enhancement Operations (Meteor) Sdn Bhd for collaboration in training, education and awareness programme on hi-tech fields.

The signing of the Mou paves the way for collaboration between both parties that will lead to the formation of advanced manufacturing institutes (AMIs).

Dr Mahathir also launched the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Industry Action Plan which was introduced by Might.

The action plan provides a comprehensive overview of the pharmaceutical industry, local and international, culminating in strategic recommendations and action plan, for immediate to long term.

The recommendations in the action plan are based on the dual-pronged thrust

-- to significantly reduce Malaysia's dependency on imported pharmaceutical products and at the same time to create a world-class local pharmaceutical industry.

The prime minister also witnessed the signing of an MoU for a project called Combinatorial Technology and Catalysis (COMBICAT) where six partners including three international organisations will collaborate on the upgrading of natural gas and palm oil to higher added value.

The special briefing began with Might's joint-chairman (government) Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Zaharudin Idrus highlighting the subject of redefining Might which covers the creation of action plans to support policy implementation and domestic industrial deepening for high technology industry development.

Dr Mahathir, who repeatedly stressed the need for collaboration of the private sector with the government during his speech, said only by close relationship that both sectors could keep up with the industrial development.

"We know that technology is advancing very fast and therefore we need to understand what is happening," he said.

He also advised both sectors not to be too selfish on whatever technologies they came up with.

"We need to share with other countries like what we did during the Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) where participants exchange ideas on the latest technologies they have come up with.

"We must not be jealous of our own secrets of development. We want to

create a win-win situation. If we help countries to enrich, we can gain from that. If they remain poor, they cannot buy our products," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also asked at a news conference later what was discussed at the closed-door dialogue he had with members of Might after the special briefing.

"We discussed the need for us to find niches for ourselves particularly of our competitive strength...example, we are good in estate management," he said.

Might is a non-profit company incorporated in 1994 under the Malaysia Inc concept and has initiated hi-tech developments in telecommunications, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, construction and housing, herbal products, automotives and alternative energy.

-- BERNAMA

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