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Mahathir-ICT

M'SIA CAN BE AS ADVANCED AS ANY DEVELOPED COUNTRY, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysia can be as advanced as any developed country in certain areas particularly in information and communication technology (ICT).

He said that this was because Malaysia had the opportunity to begin at the same time as other countries, unlike during the industrial revolution when Malaysia was a mere recipient and not a participant.

"We were a colony, we were not the participant in the industrial revolution, we were merely the recipient. But today, in IT, we have the opportunity to start together with everybody else (and) therefore we should be able at least to keep up with the rest or even if we are behind, not far behind," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, made the remarks in his observation and speech at the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) annual briefing here.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysians must believe in themselves and be confident about their own ability that they were as good as those in advanced countries.

"If we set our minds to understanding the process of the research and development (R&D), then we can achieve. We must tell ourselves to continually improvise on the things that we have.

"We are living in an exciting age and there seems to be no limit to human ingenuity," he said.

As such, Dr Mahathir said, as civilised people, Malaysians must learn to adjust themselves to the environment and not the other way around.

He urged the private sector to invest in R&D because buying technology from others was not the right way.

"One fine day you'll find yourself with tons of money from R&D," he said.

Dr Mahathir pointed out that R&D was a question of mindset and culture. "Some people, some culture, some races seem to be capable of doing a lot of research and then developing the results, while others seem incapable and mere consumers of the technology."

Besides, he said, there were numerous sectors such as aerospace, automotive, ICT and manufacturing that Malaysian companies could do R&D to contribute to the development and enhancement of the country's achievement.

-- BERNAMA

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