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Mahathir-GDP

M'SIA'S TRADE CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO GDP

ALOR GAJAH, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysia's total trade contributes significantly to its gross domestic product (GDP), even higher than that of some developed economies.

"Malaysia's total trade is one of the highest in the world. For countries like Japan, its imports and exports contribute only nine percent of the country's GDP, while in the US it is only 18 percent," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when performing the ground-breaking ceremony of Kolej Universiti Teknikal Kebangsaan Malaysia (KUTKM) at Durian Tunggal here. The RM950 million KUTKM would be fully completed in 2010.

Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad and KUTKM chairman Tan Sri Mohd Saleh Sulong were among some 3,000 people at the ceremony.

"This is our achievement. From what is seen, our rakyat are capable of manufacturing sophisticated products, and expertise is important as Malaysia is a trading country," he said.

However, he said that the products were manufactured by foreign-owned companies as Malaysian companies were still not capable of achieving the sophisticated level required.

Dr Mahathir said that Malaysians needed to be competitive and to acquire the highest level of knowledge so that they could help the country to achieve its vision.

"That is why the government is willing to invest billions of ringgit to develop educational institutions at all levels, including building universities.

"In the last 10 years, the number of universities has mushroomed, in the hope that the future generation will have wide knowledge," he said.

He said knowledge was important for the people's well-being and to make Malaysia a developed country, the people's per capita income had to be raised.

"We cannot be a developed country if the people do not have adequate knowledge in all fields. The people should know how to design, invent and produce goods not only for the country's needs but also for the world markets," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the people should realise that knowledge was important for the country's development, especially in the fields of science, technology and engineering.

He also wanted the people to be inculcated with positive attitudes and high moral values.

"We do not want students to get high qualifications but use it (knowledge) to commit sophisticated crimes. Knowledge without high moral values can be abused to bring dire consequences," he said.

He said the civilisation of some people who used atomic and nuclear bombs to kill others was more primitive than the Stone Age community.

-- BERNAMA

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