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Mahathir-Scholarships

OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS TO FOREIGNERS, MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURERS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 24 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has suggested that Malaysian manufacturers offer scholarships to foreign students as part of their investment to sell their products abroad.

The Prime Minister said that by giving the foreign students scholarships to enable them to study Malaysian technology and machines, it would help sell their products.

"If we were to sell our products, people must know our capability and how our products function.

"One way of doing this is of course to bring people here to see and the best way of seeing is for them to come and study here...it is an investment by giving them scholarships," he told reporters after launching Technology Park Malaysia's first made-in-Malaysia computer numerical control (CNC) machine, the Master CNC 10HVA, here today.

For example, Dr Mahathir said, the students who study here and know how to operate the CNC machine would be familiar with it and know how the machine performs.

"So, when they return and work in their own country, they can recommend our machine," he said.

The Prime Minister also cited a mistake committed by the British when they charged full fee for Malaysian students but not the Europeans.

"I say you (the British) are making a mistake because our (Malaysian) engineers, trained in England, come back here and (when) you ask them to do anything, all they can think of are the British consultants, engineering, machines and all that.

"But if they are familiar with Japanese machines, then they will recommend the Japanese machines. So it is a mistake...they (the British) are saving a few dollars from the fees but they are losing them from their exports," he said.

Asked on research and development (R&D) activities, mostly being undertaken by the public sector rather than the private sector, Dr Mahathir said that the R&D culture had yet to be found in the Malaysian private sector.

Although, there was a lot of research activities being done in the agriculture sector such as in rubber and palm oil, the research results were not used extensively.

R&D activities in manufacturing and high-technology products involved a lot of investment, he said, and they were also going to compete against each other in the business.

"So, it's a dicey thing...that is why they're not going in but then, we have good results also. Malaysians don't seem to want to use the results of the research, as done by Mardi. So the problem with us is there's a mental block," he said.

Earlier in his speech, Dr Mahathir said that he was glad that the technology park was functioning and involved in a lot of R&D activities in many areas of engineering, information technology and biotechnology.

"We're moving very fast in this era of technology...our shelf-life has become shorter and we need to use our capabilities all the time," he said, adding that it was vital for Malaysians to improve their capabilities and know-how if they want to progress.

The Prime Minister said that everything in this planet could be improved.

He said that research should be conducted to study why teak trees took such a long time to grow.

"...teak trees can be planted along the highways but they do not grow in uniform. We need to know why some trees grow faster, why some don't...we should do some experiment and maybe, we can stimulate growth of the tree much faster," he said.

The hardened teak trees, he said, take at least 90 years to mature.

Dr Mahathir also suggested that an "aim right urinal" device be created to give Malaysians better ways of cleaning up themselves and ensure Malaysian toilets were much cleaner.

-- BERNAMA

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