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Smart Partnership a success

WITH a mission to boost Malaysia's high-technology competency and capability, Malaysian Industry-Government Group or High Technology (MiGHT) has come a long way.

It reached another mile-stone when it recently celebrated its 10th anniversary.

"The beginning of MiGHT started in 1992 with the conceptualisation of an idea to foster partnerships between industry and government to promote and identify techno-business opportunities through harnessing of science and technology," said MiGHT previous Joint Chairman (Government) Tan Sri Dr Omar Abdul Rahman (picture).

With initiatives by the Science Advisor's Office of the Prime Minister's Department to integrate the private sector in national development as well as exploring the idea of fostering partnerships between industry and government, MiGHT was established.

MiGHT's initial goal, said by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (then Prime Minister) at its launching in 1993, was to look for business opportunities for Malaysia through the use of technology to attain Vision 2020 goals.

"This smart partnership forms a spirit of working together and cements the concept that the public sector needs to work together with the Government to achieve and sustain a developed nation," he had said.

Prior to the establishment of MiGHT in 1994 as an independent organisation under the Companies Act 1965, it was managed by MiGHT Special Unit For High Technology, or MiGHT Special Unit, a unit under the Office of the Science Advisor of the Prime Minister's Department.

"At the beginning, MiGHT and MiGHT Special Unit were functioning as one in terms of roles, objectives and reporting. The director of MiGHT Special Unit also acted as the chief executive of MiGHT while the management executives of MiGHT, who were selected by the Science Advisor from public sector organisations, assumed dual roles in both setups," said Omar, who was also a former science advisor to the Prime Minister.

MiGHT (and MiGHT Special Unit) were tasked to help in executing the activities of the Office of Science Advisor, who reported directly to the Prime Minister and administratively to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia.

MiGHT was registered on Oct 15, 1994 as a non-profit organisation, limited by guarantee, under the control of the Office of the Science Advisor, the Prime Minister's Department.

It continued to be managed by the Special Unit until the Unit was closed in 1998 (following the stream-lining of divisions and functions of MiGHT).

"One of the critical pre-conditions of the restructuring was that the strong bridge between MiGHT and the Prime Minister's Department must be maintained, if not strengthened, as MiGHT plays an important role in the Office of the Science Advisor in complementing and supporting its activities and the national technology development agenda," he added.

The need for this strong link between MiGHT and the Prime Minister's Department to be maintained was reflected in the constitutional set up of MiGHT, whereby it was fixed that the Prime Minister is the patron of MiGHT while the Science Advisor of the Prime Minister's Department is the Joint Chairman (Government) MiGHT.

Seeing MiGHT's commendable achievements, one can say that it has fulfilled its goals.

"It has attracted the attention of the private sector as judged by the growing number of private sector members.

"This proves that MiGHT has evolved into an organisation which plays a

major role in the advisory process on Science and Technology matters related to business development," he said.

He added: "I believe MiGHT should continue to evolve to fill niches to strengthen Malaysia R17's capacity to harness technology for development. Its advisory role to the Prime Minister should be fully recognised and strengthened."