

Dr Mahathir Wants Scientists To Come Up With Products Suited For Global Use
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight called on scientists from tropical countries to conduct more research to produce high-technology products which are globally suitable regardless of climate differences.

He said that most of the technology used in tropical countries came from outside the region and may not necessarily suit the local requirement.

"We have to ensure what we produce here can be resilient worldwide. For example, Malaysia produces Proton which has been successfully tested in a cold country like Sweden.

"On the contrary, hybrid technology used in cars from certain other countries cannot function as well as it is supposed to, here," he said in his speech at the 2011 Mahathir Science Award presentation here, Tuesday night.

The recipient, Professor Yuan Longping who is acknowledged as the "Father of Hybrid Rice", went home with RM100,000 in cash, a gold medal and a certificate.

Dr Mahathir also urged Malaysian scientists to be more competitive internationally and produce products that could benefit the world.

The Mahathir Science Award was launched by Dr Mahathir in 2004, in recognition of scientists and institutions who had contributed to cutting edge tropical research, that had an impact on society.

Born on Sept 7, 1930 in Beijing, Professor Yuan was the first to develop hybrid rice varieties in the 1970s, which had been grown in dozens of countries in Africa, America and Asia, thus providing a robust food source in high famine risk areas.

Present were Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili, Mahathir Science Award Foundation chairman Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid and Academy of Sciences Malaysia president Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Tajuddin Ali.

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