

**Innovation Boosts Country's Progress- Muhyiddin  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 12 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said innovations produced by institutions of higher learning (IPT) could boost the development of a country. He said they were also capable of strengthening the country's position in the world's competitive ranking.

"Innovation is an important agenda for the country. The contributions by the country's IPT in the education field are significant and they have contributed a lot to the national innovation system.

"Research and development activities being carried out by the IPT have great potentials whether for commercial purposes or as a practice to increase the country's productivity and prosperity," he said when launching the "My Second Eye" innovation programme, here Tuesday.

My Second Eye, a project carried out in collaboration with Universiti Teknikal Malaysia (UTeM) and Standard Chartered Bank (M) Berhad, is part of the bank's corporate social responsibility (SCR) initiative focusing on the blind and the visually impaired community under its 'Seeing is Believing Programme'.

The device, with built-in sensors that are able to scan the surrounding and alert the users on obstruction above waist level, produces an alarm that informs the location of the obstruction and guides the user around it.

Muhyiddin said the device, produced through the UTeM research programme, opened another new chapter in the country's innovation.

He said latest statistics showed there were 46,875 individuals with impaired vision in the country.

"Therefore, an innovation like this can at least help them to be independent without relying on others for assistance," he added.

Earlier, the chairman of UTeM Board of Directors, Tan Sri Prof Ir Dr Ahmad Zaidee Laidin said the device was designed after a thorough and intensive research that was spurred by the observation that the conventional white-stick used by the blinds today had its limitations.

He said My 2nd Eye, was also called the 'Goggle Glass for the Blind'.

With a capacity matching the ability of normal eyes, the device, used together with the white-stick, offer the users a 360 degrees assistance and protection as they move in public

places.

He said My 2nd Eye had the capacity of easing and enhancing the quality of life for the less fortunate.

Standard Chartered (M) Berhad chief executive officer Osman Morad said the programme was considered a pilot project in which 10 pairs of My Second Eye devices were donated to 10 visually impaired recipients.

During this trial period the recipients would share their feedback to further improve the device, he said.

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