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**BREAKTHROUGH:** Abdullah (second right) listens to a briefing by Mimos Berhad graphic designer Hamdan Jasison on Mak Cik PC, the slimmest computer in the world, during a visit to an exhibition booth. Jarjis is at third right.— Bernama photo

## Big leap forward needed to advance innovation agenda

**KUALALUMPUR:** Malaysia needs to take a big leap forward to enable innovation-related fields to play a bigger role in the country's economic development, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said that such fields were important as they would bring about new discoveries and creations that would allow the country to attain greater progress in line with its ambition to become a developed nation by 2020.

In this connection, he said, Malaysia would need to nurture a pool of highly-educated and first-class human capital.

"We want to produce human capital having the mindset to propel innovation-related initiatives that will enable the country to achieve greater heights," said Abdullah when opening the National Innovation Conference and Exhibition 2007 yesterday.

Abdullah said that young people should equip themselves with the necessary knowledge that would enable them to come up with new

creations and discover new things.

The Prime Minister also said that adequate funding was needed to develop and market new products in the country.

Abdullah toured the exhibition after chairing the second National Innovation Council meeting.

Present were Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Jamaludin Jarjis and Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein.

A paper entitled 'Malaysia: Market and Technology-Driven Innovation for Wealth Creation and Societal Well-Being' was presented at the meeting which, according to Abdullah, was important to the implementation of innovation-related programmes.

He also witnessed the exchange of memorandums of understanding between several parties, including the one between Malaysia's Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry and Indonesia's Research and Technology Ministry on a tsunami alert system. — Bernama