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Allocate national budget for R&D: Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR: The Government should allocate a national budget for research and development, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic) said Thursday.

He said the budget should be increased gradually, with R&D seen as work that could ensure long-term profitability for the country. "Maybe not three per cent yet, but slowly working up to three per cent," he said at the 25th anniversary celebrations of Mimos at Technology Park Malaysia near here.



He said Malaysians should do away with the mentality that carrying out R&D was costly and that not too much should be spent on it.

"We still have some problems where people don't understand research and development. We are ready to use other people's research and products of their research, but for us to do research is something quite new. "If we want to ensure future profit, we must have R&D," he added.

On Mimos, which acts as an adviser to the government on technologies, Dr Mahathir said it had changed the mindset of Malaysians on the value of research.

It had achieved this despite there being a "very stingy amount" of money spent on research since Mimos was established in 1985, he said, adding that he was impressed with products developed by the organisation.

In conjunction with the celebrations, Dr Mahathir was awarded the National ICT Leadership Award.

Earlier, in his speech, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Maximus Ongkili said that Malaysia must push the envelope on intellectual property if it were to be recognised as an inventor, and not just a user, of technology.

He said that marketable IPs from research would result in royalties for researchers and generate wealth for the nation.

"As such, the focus at Mimos to encourage researchers to turn their ideas and novelty into IPs will give the nation a competitive edge," he said.

Last year, Ongkili said, Mimos contributed 40.4 per cent or 135 of Malaysia's 334 patent applications filed at the Patent Cooperation Treaty, with Malaysia ranked 25th among countries filing patents at the global level.

He called for an increase in the uptake and adoption of Mimos technology platforms in the local market to generate wealth for the country. — Bernama