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Develop indigenous technologies: Dr Chan

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KUCHING: Malaysia needs to develop its indigenous technologies to sustain its industrialisation capability to ensure that it will not be disrupted by any quarters.

“Up to now only a small portion of the technology is indigenous to the country, and nearly all the technologies used in Malaysian industries are of foreign origin.

“This does not augur well for the country as it means that as long as the foreign technologies continue to flow in, our process of industrialisation cannot be sustained without interruption,” said Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Datuk Amar Dr George Chan.

And he warned that this would slow down or stop altogether when such technologies were not forthcoming from abroad.

He issued this caution when speaking at the opening of the 19th Regional Conference on Solid State Science and Technology held at a hotel here yesterday.

Dr Chan said: “We should not

lose sight of the fact that to achieve our long-term objective to be a fully industrialised nation by the year 2020, we should develop our capability not just in applied research but also in basic or fundamental research.”

According to him, applied research could only meet the immediate industrial needs and allow us to develop our capability to the stage of utilising existing technologies and to make improvements to them.

Basic research would be crucial for the development of new technologies which were necessary for the long-term growth of the industries, he added.

He called on domestic scientists to venture into the unknown and be bold enough to try out their imagination, adding that phenomena seemingly non-applicable today could become great technologies tomorrow.

Therefore, even though our limited resources would not allow us to put too much emphasis on basic

research we should increase our provision of funding and efforts in this direction, he stressed.

Dr Chan disclosed that RM35 million had been allocated to public universities for 2002 out of the federal government provision of some RM100 million for basic research under the Eighth Malaysia Plan.

And Unimas had received RM2 million of the amount for its basic research programme, apart from another RM1 million from the Intensification of Research Priority Areas (IRPA), he said.

He encouraged universities and research institutes to identify research projects that could be undertaken on a co-operative basis, and share research and development resources among themselves.

Saying such collaboration might be necessary because of the limited number of researchers in such institutions, he added the IRPA mechanism allowed such joint projects to be funded and conducted.

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