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# 'R&D vital in high-income nation goal'

**CRUCIAL:** Higher learning institutions can create an innovation-driven economy, says Kamalanathan

**SAMEER AHMED SHAIKH**

**R**ESearch and development (R&D) is the key ingredient that could drive Malaysia towards its goal of achieving a high-income nation status by 2020.

Deputy Education Minister II P. Kamalanathan said R&D was crucial to enable Malaysia to move from an efficiency-driven economy to an innovation-driven one.

"R&D will propel Malaysia to become a high-income country based on knowledge, innovation and creativity by 2020."

Kamalanathan said this after officiating the soft launch of the International Conference and Exposition on Invention of Institutions of Higher Learning (Pecipta) 2013 yesterday.

Held every two years and now in its seventh edition, the exposition showcases inventions and innovations of higher learning institutions from Taiwan, Korea, Turkey, Egypt and Indonesia, along with 25 local institutes, polytechnics and schools.

Kamalanathan said Pecipta was a platform for higher learning institutions to increase their involvement in R&D and to encourage networking and cooperation with industry players.

He said Malaysia's efforts to achieve high-income nation status was on track, as could be seen in the 2012-2013 Global Competitiveness Index Report, which stated that

Malaysia was moving towards an innovation-driven economy.

Earlier, Kamalanathan, who appeared on TV3's morning talk show *Malaysia Hari Ini*, said the objective of the exposition was to support the aims and aspirations of the government in spearheading national development through emphasis on R&D.

It was to also display inventions, achieved through R&D, and the commercialisation of products.

The exposition is jointly organised by Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). It is co-sponsored by Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd.

To date, 11 memorandums of understanding have been signed between universities and industry players to commercialise their products.

This year, 506 exhibits will be showcased. The expo will be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from Nov 7 to 9, from 10am to 6pm.

Present at the soft launch were Education Ministry's Public Higher Education Institutions deputy director-general Datin Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir, UNIMAP Vice-Chancellor Datuk Prof Dr Kamarudin Hussin, UUM deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Abdul Razak Saleh and Media Prima Bhd group managing director Datuk Amrin Awaluddin.

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Deputy Education Minister II **P. Kamalanathan** (second from left) visiting a booth at the soft launch of the **International Conference and Exposition on Invention of Institutions of Higher Learning 2013** in Seri Pentas, Bandar Utama, yesterday. Pic by Salhani Ibrahim