

150 MIT STUDENTS WASTED THEIR TIME: MAHATHIR

\$450,000 lost through scholarship abuse

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THE Government lost \$450,000 when 150 out of 600 Mara Institute of Technology students failed their examinations last year, Education Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed said today.

In all probability the students would have passed their examinations if they had not wasted their time in useless activities, he said in an obvious reference to the student demonstrations last year.

"The Government will not hesitate to withdraw the scholarships of MIT students if they are not interested in their studies," Dr. Mahathir said.

He was speaking to reporters

when he paid his first official visit to the institute.

Dr. Mahathir said the Government spent \$3,000 on each student for his education, accommodation and other facilities.

He urged the students to make full use of the opportunities rather than waste their time.

Full-time lecturers

On the appointment of Dr. Arshad Ayub as the deputy Governor of Bank Negara, Dr. Mahathir said an official would be appointed soon to act as MIT director.

Dr. Arshad told the Minister that there were 400 full-time lecturers at the MIT compared with 20 lecturers 10 years ago.

"Last year the institute produced 400 graduates and from next year there will be 1,000 graduates a year," he said.

He said an increasing number of students were seeking admission to the MIT each year.

Last year, 20,000 students applied. The 1975/76 student enrolment at the Shah Alam campus is 6,800.

"There are 8,900 students in the MIT campuses at Shah Alam, Petaling Jaya, Perlis, Kota Kinabalu, Kuching and Kuala Trengganu," Dr. Arshad said.

He said there was increasing recognition of MIT qualifications by the private and the Government sectors.

"This has been made possible through close relationship with several institutions of higher

learning the world over, particularly in the United States, Britain and Australia," he said.

He said the MIT maintained this relationship through student exchanges, training of MIT lecturers and graduates, visiting professors and consultants on programme development.

Protest move

About 300 students held a peaceful demonstration in front of the MIT administration block when Dr. Mahathir visited the campus.

A spokesman for the students, Alias Anor Abdul, said they were protesting against the Government's move to withdraw scholarships from students involved in the last year's student demonstrations.

He said they were also protesting against the appointment of Datuk Arshad as the deputy Governor of Bank Negara.