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TAR COLLEGE SHOULD CHANGE ITS PHILOSOPHY: MAHATHIR

Mahathir -- TAR

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KUALALUMPUR, Oct 5, (Bernama) -- The Tunku Abdul Rahman College should change its philosophy and admit more non-Chinese students, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He told reporters after a TAR College convocation at Wisma MCA here, that a study should be made to determine why not many non-Chinese entered the college although it was open to all communities.

Earlier, the Prime Minister presented certificates and diplomas to 683 graduates of the college.

Speaking at the function earlier, he said the college philosophy which was formulated in the 1960s, had become outdated and needed to be changed.

+The government has no intention to force the college to do so. , , we prefer voluntary efforts and it is up to the college to decide its future,+ he added.

The MCA-sponsored college in Jalan Genting Kelang here has about 8,000 students.-- more

▼05/10/14-25MST

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Mahathir - TAR 2 Kuala Lumpur

He said the role of the college should be reviewed in the context of changes experienced by the nation.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the establishment of the college in the early days of Malaysia's independence was to meet the demand of the Chinese community.

At that time the Bumiputeras were left far behind in education and the government had to take drastic steps to provide more educational opportunities to them so that they could catch up with the other communities.

Racial feeling then was strong and the Chinese +educationists+ demanded that a Chinese education system be implemented by the government for the Chinese community although the move could jeopardise racial unity in Malaysia, he added.

The Prime Minister said the Chinese extremists then had demanded for the setting up of a Chinese university, and the establishment of the TAR College was a +solution+ chosen by the government in line with the situation at that time.

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Mahathir - TAR 3 Kuala Lumpur

He said the opportunities for higher studies for non-Bumiputeras had increased both locally and overseas and more students could get higher education at a lower cost.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said in view of the increased educational opportunities one might ask whether there was a need for the TAR College to maintain its exclusivity and original approach.

He said the government was still giving more opportunities to Bumiputeras to enter universities and institutions of higher learning because the number of Bumiputera professionals was still small.-- more

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Mahathir - TAR 4 Kuala Lumpur

He said although the government provided a lot of scholarship to Bumiputeras, their number overseas was only 15 per cent of the total Malaysian students there.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is the first Prime Minister to attend the college convocation, said the government needed a more meaningful cooperation from non-Bumiputeras in efforts to implement the National Development Policy (NDP), aimed at enhancing the performance of Bumiputeras in the economic field.

He said the economic cake was expected to grow eight times by the year 2020 and the distribution of wealth among the various communities should be fair to reduce the economic gap among them.

In the year 2020 the racial issue should become irrelevant because all the communities would be able to compete in the economic race without handicap, he added. -- more

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Mahathir - TAR 5 Kuala Lumpur (last)

The Prime Minister said in the year 2020, the Malaysian nation would have its own identity which would not reflect the identity of the original country of any community.

So is there a need for the TAR College to maintain its present philosophy, he asked, adding that current developments required the college to change its approach.

He also said that the government would allow foreign universities to set up campuses in this country to enable more local people to pursue higher education.

Three or four universities in the United Kingdom and Japan had submitted their proposals for such campuses, he said.

Negotiations on the matter would be held as soon as possible.

Malaysia, he said, was unable to set up more universities due to shortage of academic staff.

A total of 1,537 graduates received their certificates and diplomas from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir and Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek.

Present at the ceremony were Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Health Minister Datuk Lee Kim Sai and Minister for Housing and Local Government Dr Ting Chew Peh. -- Bernama

♥05/10/15-51MST