

'It should review policies to keep pace with change'

# PM: TAR College needs a re-think

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By Robert Goh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Tunku Abdul Rahman College needs to review its role in the light of current and future changes in the country, with particular emphasis on its philosophy of exclusivity, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the college's philosophy, drawn up in the 1960s, was now out of date and needed to be reviewed and altered.

"The Government has no intention to force the college in this matter. It prefers the move to be made voluntarily. It is up to the college to determine its future."

ures to provide them with as much opportunities to help them catch up with other communities.

Quotas were given to them to enter local universities and institutions of higher learning. This gave the impression that the educational interests of the other communities had been neglected.

Moreover, at that time, there were not many opportunities to study abroad, the

centage of Bumiputera professionals is still insufficient compared to the Bumiputera population at large, he said.

That is why the Government still needed to give more opportunities to the Bumiputeras. The quotas in universities and institutions such as the Mara Institute of Technology were still important and essential.

The Prime Minister said

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COLLEGE WANTS TO ADMIT MORE STUDENTS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

FOREIGN VARSITIES CAN HAVE CAMPUSES HERE, SAYS P.M.

Dr Mahathir said this at the college's convocation at Wisma MCA today. The Prime Minister, who was dressed in his own University of Malaya graduation gown, presented diplomas and certificates to many of the 683 graduands.

Also present were TAR College council chairman and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, who is also Transport Minister, and other MCA Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

At the beginning of his address, Dr Mahathir said that by attending the convocation he became the first Prime Minister to have done so, and this was to assess TAR College's role in the national education system.

Dr Mahathir wondered whether the college would maintain its philosophy in the light of Vision 2020. The changes taking place in the country should compel the college to change its views, more so with the objectives of Vision 2020 in mind.

The college was established on the insistence of the country's Chinese community in the early years of Malaysia's independence. At that time, the differences in achievements among the various communities were obvious, he said.

The Bumiputera community had been left behind in the field of education, so much so that the Government had to take firm mea-

Prime Minister said, adding that the number of Malaysian students abroad was limited.

"This gave rise to calls for a special institution for the Chinese community. It cannot be denied that racial feelings at that time were strong and there were Chinese educationists who wanted a Chinese education system to be implemented by the Government even though this would undermine racial unity in the country.

"In fact, Chinese extremists at that time pressed for the establishment of a Chinese university."

The establishment of TAR College was the solution chosen by the Government then, as the approach was felt to be most appropriate for the conditions at that time, when relations between the communities were so tense that they exploded in the May 13 incident.

But 20 years have since passed and conditions in Malaysia have changed since then.

Even though the New Economic Policy (NEP) has succeeded in improving Bumiputera achievements, the position of the non-Bumiputeras have actually shown more improvement.

At this point in time, Bumiputera achievements in the field of education are still lagging and the per-

that educational facilities for non-Bumiputeras had increased because of their ability and wider opportunities to study abroad.

Though the Government gave many scholarships to Bumiputeras, they only comprise 15 per cent of all Malaysian students overseas, and this affected efforts to balance the number of Bumiputera and non-Bumiputera students.

He also said non-governmental educational institutions had increased and that twinning programmes with foreign universities had allowed many citizens to obtain higher education in an easier and cheaper way.

Moreover, to further reduce these costs, the Government would allow foreign universities to set up local campuses.

"This is the scenario today. The question that has to be raised is — what is the role of TAR College? Is the exclusivity and the approach it practises still relevant?"

He asked whether non-Bumiputeras still harboured doubts about their future and their share in the nation's progress.

If all communities made a success of development plans, the question of race would become irrelevant because each community would be able to compete without handicaps.