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CONTRIBUTION OF PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Mahathir-education

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 11 (Bernama) -- <sup>92</sup> Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the setting up of private educational institutions in the country by itself create an element of privatisation in the country's educational system without the government's involvement.

The Prime Minister said that such a contribution would not only reduce the flow of foreign exchange but also allows more people in the country to get an education with lesser funds.

Such benefits would be more meaningful if more institutions of higher learning were to offer courses which were now mainly available abroad, he said when opening Institute Teknologi Tun Abdul Razak here.

He said that privatisation introduced by the private sector in the educational system differed from the process underwent by Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Pos Malaysia Berhad and Tenaga Nasional Berhad initiated by the government.

+It has been noted that the private sector is more successful in curbing expenses in running educational institutions compared with the government, + he added. -- more

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Mahathir-privatisation 2 Kuala Lumpur

Besides, he said, the setting up of more private educational centres including by foreign educational institutions also allows the government to distribute financial allocation for other purposes as they were able to assist in providing facilities that could not be provided by the government.

Dr Mahathir however said that the government wants the programme of cooperation with notable foreign centres of higher learning be upgraded to ensure that the quality of education would not be affected due to the institution's extremely rapid progress.

Educational opportunities provided in the country would enable students to pursue an education in their own country until they were more mature and able to preserve their culture when they further their studies at a higher level.

The Prime Minister said that through the privatisation system also the country would be able to produce more skilled manpower as the sector was more flexible to play a more effective role in planning certain approaches in accordance with manpower needs compared with the public sector.

Besides, Dr Mahathir said, the initiatives taken by the private sector were highly appreciated as Malaysia was really in need of a policy to liberalise the educational field as no government was able to provide educational needs in all fields. -- more

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He was proud with the setting up of the institute, fully owned by the Koperasi Usaha Bersatu Malaysia Berhad (KUB, and fully fulfilling one of KUB's objective to assist in improving the education of children of members.

Dr Mahathir also applauded the institute for being the only institution with a programme of cooperation with a foreign college -- West Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education di United Kingdom -- offering various courses fully in Bahasa Malaysia.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said that his family agreed to allow the use of the late Tun Abdul Razak's name by the institute in view of the fact that among others, education was a field he tried to promote in his lifetime.

As a token of support to KUB's efforts, his ministry was prepared to allow the institute train retiring military personnel to enable them to upgrade their skills and professionalism in their respective career.

Meanwhile, KUB Chairman Hassan Harun, who is president of the institute, said that more branches would be opened throughout the country soon. A branch has already been set up in Kota Baharu.

He said that at present the institute was holding discussions to provide a degree programme with Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction in the fields of Business Management and Computer Engineering in collaboration with the Swansea Institute of Higher Education and an MBA Executive Programme in collaboration with a local university. -- Bernama

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