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Review-Mahathir (Education) '''

MALAYSIA PLANS TO INTERNATIONALISE EDUCATION, SAYS PM

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia plans to develop education as a significant component of the services industry and to eventually internationalise education, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

There is a need to develop education as a service export, he said when tabling the Mid-Term Review of the Sixth Malaysia Plan in the Dewan Rakyat today.

Steps would be taken to facilitate the establishment of private higher education degree granting institutions, including the setting up of branch campuses of established foreign institutions, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the Universities and University College Act was also being reviewed with a view to developing appropriate regulations, procedures and guidelines for the establishment of private higher education institutions in the country.

The thrust of education and training programmes is to increase accessibility through more facilities, enhance quality through improving curriculum and teaching materials and by strengthening the delivery system through enhancing knowledge and skills of teaching staff. --more

▼16/12/18-53MST

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The Prime Minister also announced plans to build 12,000 new classrooms at the primary and secondary school levels to provide places for an additional 480,000 students.

This would help reduce overcrowding in urban schools while replacing dilapidated classrooms in the rural areas.

To increase science and technological manpower, eight new technical schools and 38 secondary vocational schools would be upgraded so that more students could pursue scientific, vocational and engineering subjects.

The handicapped are also not ignored. Dr Mahathir said to increase the participation of handicapped children and those with learning disabilities, 11 new special schools would be built for about 1,300 children with hearing and visual impairments.

Besides expanding the teacher training programme, accessibility to tertiary education would be increased by expanding existing institutions and establishing new facilities. (76) --more

▼16/12/19-08MST

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Four new polytechnics in Dungun, Johor Bahru, Pulau Pinang and Shah Alam and the branch campus of the Institut Teknologi Mara (ITM) are under construction in Merbuk.

Master plans would also be prepared for the ITM branch campus in Pulau Pinang, the medical complex of the International Islamic University in Kuantan and the permanent campus of the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) in Sarawak. When completed, these institutions would add 47,000 more places at the tertiary level.

Dr Mahathir said a long-term plan would be formulated for higher education because economic development would create a demand for additional manpower with higher educational level.

He said this would increase the enrolment at tertiary level to 20 percent of the 19-24 year age group by the year 2020, compared with only 7.3 percent in 1990.

The private sector would also play a larger role in providing higher education with training institutions currently under public sector firms such as Petronas, Tenaga Nasional Berhad and Telekom Malaysia to be upgraded into institutes of higher education and equipped with better qualified trainers. -- Bernama

16/12/19-27MST

Review-Education 4 Kuala Lumpur (Last)

On tertiary education, the report said that during the review period, a total 89,050 students graduated from tertiary institutions while the ratio of degree to diploma and certificate graduates remained at about 53:47 and the ratio of output of arts to science and technology graduates at the degree level was unchanged at about 63:37.

It said at the diploma level, the ratio of arts to science and technology was 51:49 and at the certificate level 22:78. -- Bernama

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