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Mahathir-Education

GOVERNMENT WORRIED OVER STANDARD OF PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, June 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the government is worried over the standard of some of the private institutions of higher learning in the country.

He said that the government would have to relook at some of the 600 private institutions as some of them are not keeping up with their standard.

Speaking to reporters after opening Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten) in Serdang near here, he said efforts must be made to ensure that they upgrade their standard.

He said if they fail to do so, they would be barred from advertising the courses offered as they could be misleading.

"We are worried over the standard of some of the private universities," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked whether the government would allow more private institutions of higher learning to be set up in the country.

"We will have to see whether it is necessary or not...we have been very generous. There are about 600 different private institutions but we worry because some are not up to the standard," he said.

Dr Mahathir cited as an example students returning from abroad but could not obtain jobs because the government does not recognise their qualification.

"Some students enrol into universities which the Malaysian government does not recognise and when they return, obviously the government will not accept their qualification and when this happens, they become angry at the government," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that graduates without jobs at the end of their studies should not blame the government as the mistake lies with them for taking up courses which do not prepare them for job opportunities.

He said that they should instead pursue studies in fields which could prepare them for jobs with good demand like information technology and engineering.

Uniten's chairman of the board Tan Sri Tajuddin Ali said that the university has 6,500 students pursuing studies in various fields, far exceeding the original development projection made in the mid 1990s, which was about 2,000 students this year and 5,000 in 2005.

He also said that the third phase of the project involving the construction of premises for the Business Management College and the Information Technology College, estimated at RM300 million would commence end of the year and expected to be completed in 2002.

He said that RM700 million was spent for the implementation of phases one and two involving the construction of the administrative block, the library, Engineering College, multi-purpose hall, Executive Development Centre and hostels.

According to him, efforts were also being made to set up the Uniten Foundation to handle the acquisition of land and buildings and all facilities and assets of the university.

-- BERNAMA

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