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Tamil newspapers welcome decision on medical college

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THE controversy surrounding the Malacca Manipal Medical College has been resolved following the Cabinet's decision to allow the institution three years to overcome weaknesses in its programme.

Malaysia Nanban reported yesterday that the pioneer batch of students who had completed their courses would be allowed to graduate without having to sit for an exit examination as had been proposed by the Malaysian Medical Council.

The newspaper quoted Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng as saying that they would have to do a two-month internship at either the Malacca or Muar hospitals.

In addition, the newspaper added, the institution would have to expand the duration of the course from four-and-a-half years to five years.

The issue had come to a boil after the MIC protested that it was unfair for the MMC to suddenly impose such a requirement without adequate notice or justification to those concerned.

MIC president and Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu raised the issue at the weekly Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

This saw the MMC's decision being rescinded in favour of the directive for internship.

Malaysia Nanban, in an editorial yesterday, applauded the Cabinet's decision, saying that it would help ease the anxiety of students who had been shaken by news of an exit examination.

It also praised the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his timely directive to the Health Minister to investigate the matter.

The editorial, in analysing the situation, said the exit examination would have literally meant that the institution would have fallen into the ranks of the unrecognised medical colleges.

Meanwhile, Samy Vellu left for Sri Lanka on Thursday on a mission to enhance trade links besides looking at a potential project to build 25,000 houses for civil servants on the island state.

Tamil Nesan quoted him as saying that a Malaysian firm had been granted the project which would be a feather in the cap for the Malaysian construction industry.