

Gov't right in liberalising higher education
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The government made the right decision to liberalise the higher education sector in 1996, enabling more students to pursue their tertiary education locally, Najib Abdul Razak said today.

The prime minister said the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996 had encouraged private sector and government-linked companies and foreign institutions to set up universities and branch campuses as well as conduct twinning programmes in the country.

"It was a blue ocean strategy before the term was even coined and became popular in providing more places for Malaysians as local institutions cannot accommodate all the qualified students and not every Malaysian can afford the cost of an overseas education," he said at the 13th convocation of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman at Wisma MCA.

Also present were MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek, Deputy Higher Education Minister Hou Kok Chung and university president Chuah Hean Teik.

Najib added that the willingness to invest in human capital development had held Malaysia in good stead as a nation.

He said that in just one generation Malaysia was transformed from a low income agriculture economy into an upper middle income modern industrial economy.

"Human capital lies at the core of innovation and productive high income economy.

"No economy can succeed without a highly skilled talent base that respond creatively to economic changes, and is centred on creating, developing and utilising knowledge," he said.

He congratulated the graduands and told them graduands that their responsibility now is to propel the nation to greater heights.

"I urge you to go forth with this strong sense of responsibility and underpin your pursuit of success with uncompromising integrity, transparent, ethics and moral values which are the hallmarks of truly educated individuals," he said.

The prime minister presented scrolls to 60 of the 2,773 graduands at the ceremony.

- Bernama