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Najib: Our education system a big success

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia has made education available to all classes of people at a faster rate and with a wider reach than other countries.

This was a huge success for the country, thanks to the vision of past leaders like former prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, who expanded secondary school education for Malay students.

Deputy Prime Minister

Datuk Seri Najib Razak said this at a dinner last night to celebrate the 50th anniversary of three of the country's first Malay secondary schools — Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman (STAR), Sekolah Datuk Abdul Razak (SDAR) and Sekolah Tun Fatimah (STF).

Najib's father, Razak, who was then education minister, had issued what is now

known as the "Razak Statement" in 1956 in which he called for the establishment of Malay secondary schools.

STAR, SDAR and STF were the result of that policy which Najib said "revolutionised" Malaysia's education system by making education available to all.

He said these schools, which were residential schools, provided students

with the right environment to mould them as future leaders.

"In one generation — the children of poor farmers, fishermen, the lower working class, and the lowest ranking civil servants — could all achieve new heights of success.

"From among these children, we now have national leaders, corporate leaders

and those who are enjoying success in their careers.

"This is the success of our education system in having democratised education by making it available to all.

"Today, students from poor rural areas, from families who are in dire poverty, all have a chance to pursue their education."

Najib said the education system must not be rigid and

must change with the times and according to current demands.

Recalling words his father said to him while he was still a student, he said the purpose of education was to build character so that students could contribute to the country.

Also present was Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.