

Prince: Keep an open mind

The Star - 6/4/2007

Avoid extremism, students advised

IPOH: Every citizen must be open-minded and avoid prejudice and racial and religious extremism to maintain stability in the country, the Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah said.

Stressing that political stability was an important ingredient for a successful nation, he said in his keynote address at the SM Ave Maria 50th Speech Day here yesterday: "Malaysia's political stability is one of the main reasons why the nation has survived these 50 years of independence. This has been shown through the level of understanding among all the races in the country."

The country's diversity had over the years created a Malaysian identity, he noted.

Raja Nazrin also encouraged inquisitive thinking in youths to bring about a successful country.

He said youths must use their minds creatively and strip away conventional thinking to become inventors.

"Be eager to question conventions. The country does not need students who can only give correct answers on an examination paper;

we need those who can react cleverly in realistic situations," said Raja Nazrin.

The answers to those "situations," he added, could not be found in books and examination curriculum.

"Your ability to wade through life's sea of challenges is by far more important than any record you may set in school," he said.

Raja Nazrin also voiced concern that today's age of connectivity might have created individualistic behaviour in people.

"People seem to be fragmenting into increasingly separate enclaves and the violent and tragic accidents that have taken place around the world in recent years are manifestations of this alienation," he said.

A total of 41 students received excellence awards for their achievements in the recent PMR and SPM examinations and other extra-curricular activities.

Among the recipients was Chee Shew Fei, who was named the state's top student for achieving 14 1As in the SPM.

Raja Nazrin later presented RM100,000 to the school for its achievements.