

Focus on quality not quantity, says Raja Nazrin

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SERI ISKANDAR: Institutions of learning have been urged never to sacrifice quality in the pursuit of quantity.

In making the call yesterday, Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah said the country's institutions of learning should focus on quality and set a high benchmark.

"It is extremely disturbing if quantity is given so much priority that quality is neglected.

"Quality can only be achieved with detailed and in-depth planning, instead of implementing numerous programmes in a rushed manner," he said in his speech at the official opening of the Mara Professional College here yesterday.

The function was also attended by his consort, the Raja Puan Besar Perak Tuanku Zara Salim.

Others present included Raja DiHilir Perak Raja Jaafar Raja Muda Musa, the Raja Puan Muda Perak Raja Nor Mahani Raja Shahar Shah and Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohd Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

Raja Nazrin said the world's leading institutions of learning set stringent controls on both the intake of students and the teaching force to ensure quality.

"The production of qualified graduates solely depends on a qualified teaching force.

"This (qualified teaching force) is something that cannot be produced in the blink of an eye.

"They must have sufficient experience and be mature enough in the fields of research, writing and teaching... all of these need time."

He stressed that a qualified teaching force should not be burdened with the uphill task of educating lowly-qualified students.

"Hence, it is extremely vital for the quality aspects and quality control to be maintained at all times.

"Failure to do so will result in the investment in the education field coming to nought.

"There must also be a clear sense of understanding and balance between policy makers and those who execute them.

"The executors need to real-

ly understand the environment which will help in ensuring healthy intellectual growth."

Raja Nazrin also pointed out that in the 50 years since the country's independence, Malaysia had enjoyed a good record of academic achievements in terms of quantity and the focus should now be shifted to producing high-quality educational products in terms of research, publications and graduates.

"In this aspect, the learning institutions here have yet to put the nation on par with the best."

These institutions, he said, were responsible for ensuring the nation's intellectual achievements in the next 50 years and they should give due consideration to the higher education policy to fulfil the country's intellectual development agenda.

"It is also pertinent for institutions of higher learning to draft clear and precise road maps before they can achieve the same standard of quality enjoyed by leading institutions in developed countries," Raja Nazrin added.