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Dr M spells out the way forward

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BUKIT MERAH: The government and the people must pay more attention to learning and using English if Malaysia is to remain competitive globally.

Continuous efforts must be made to get Malaysians to use English as much as possible, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He told nursing graduates of the Bukit Merah Laketown Institute of Allied Health Sciences yesterday that it was important for students and the workforce to have a good grasp of English.

"English is the global language. Every type of knowl-

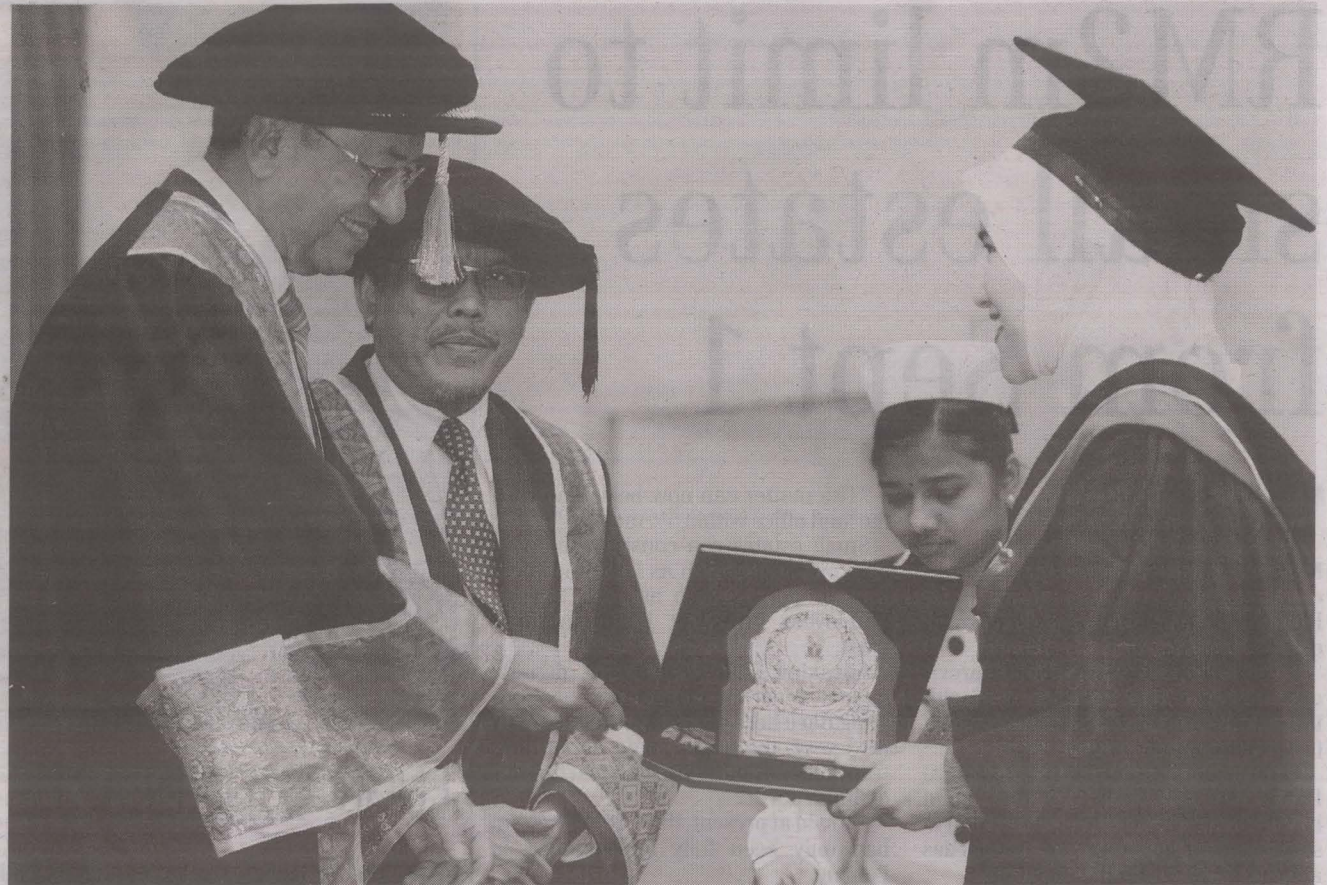
edge, information and data is channelled through this language.

"If we want to progress to greater heights then this is the language we have to learn and use daily.

"Even in China, Korea and Japan, the people are learning English because they understand its importance in ensuring their international competitiveness."

Also present were guest-of-honour Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and MK Land Holdings Bhd chairman Tan Sri Mustapha Kamal Abu Bakar, who is also chairman of the institute's board.

Dr Mahathir stressed repeatedly that the way forward was to embrace English and



Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad presenting the Tun Dr Mahathir Medal to Shahidah Samsudin for being one of the top students at the Bukit Merah Laketown Institute of Allied Health Sciences.

that Malaysia must accept that it was an important tool to push the country forward.

"Above all, if Malaysia wants to become the centre of education excellence, it cannot sideline the language."

In his 23-minute speech, Dr

Mahathir also called on academic staff, graduates and workers to continue to learn and advance their skills.

"A nation can only progress if its people are exposed to proper education and opportunities to pursue knowledge

and skills.

"But more importantly, you need to continue to enrich yourself even when you have graduated or have been working for a long time."

Later, Dr Siti Hasmah opened the convocation and

presented scrolls to 91 students.

They were the first batch to complete the three-year diploma in nursing at the institute.

Over 800 students are now studying nursing at the institute.