

**University Ranking Not The Basis For Excellent Education, Says Muhyiddin
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NILAI, May 9 (Bernama) -- The ranking of local universities at the international level is not the main consideration in accelerating the country's higher education towards excellence, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

He said this was because most of the criteria and the yardstick used to gauge the position of local universities in the world ranking did not meet the country's aspiration.

"The more important thing for the country's interest is to ensure excellence of academicians, programmes and the institutions meet the three 'R' aspects, namely relevance, referred and respect.

"...we have to find a field to strengthen the country and become the world leader in the field and this is a more significant and suitable yardstick for all types of higher learning institutions (IPT) in the country," he added.

He said this in his speech during a dialogue with key leaders of higher learning institutions on the preparation of the country's education development plan for higher learning, here today.

He said these aspects would provide a better yardstick to gauge local universities than merely on perception.

He said the country's IPTs, led by five universities which had been accorded research university status by the Education Ministry, had succeeded in producing high impact journals, hence placing Malaysia in an impressive position.

"Besides this excellence, the IPT should also focus on ensuring the returns from these research are felt by the people and benefit them," he added.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said the rapid development in technology should be utilised in the learning and teaching process at IPT with

lecturers and students having access electronically to materials developed by renowned professors, locally and abroad.

"These facilities can support the transition from curriculum development. In other words, this development should be used to enrich the learning and teaching experience of our graduates," he added.

In ensuring the ability of universities to have a clear direction and effectively implement their action plan, the deputy prime minister said the board of directors and executives of the universities concerned should understand their role and function.

He said the role of the executive board should also be reviewed so that the university could act more efficiently and speedily to meet current needs which were becoming more challenging.

The ministry, he said, would reduce bureaucratic red tapes to make it easier for universities to develop a strong management model.

Earlier, Muhyiddin opened the campus for Higher Learning Leadership Academy (AKEPT), costing RM105 million, at Bandar Enstek.

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