

Govt's flexibility allows progress in education: Taib

KUCHING, Sat. — The government's flexibility in allowing a liberal growth in private institutions of learning in the country has hastened the pace of educational development, Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said today.

He said there was no doubt at present that the country's education system was geared for the era of globalisation.

"Today it is sufficient for us to have a smart partnership with other foreign colleges or universities, especially prestigious ones, to produce course to suit the needs of our country," he said when opening the new Inti College Sarawak

campus here.

He said the country's ability to attract overseas students, now numbering about 210,000 nationwide, had good repercussions as it enabled those entering the various fields of profession to have contacts with their counterparts across national boundaries.

"In the case of Asean member countries, it is gratifying to see Filipinos, Thais and Myanmar having the opportunity to interact with Malaysians and understand each other's culture," he said.

He hoped that the relevant authorities as well as private institutions would

accelerate students' interest in patronising such arrangements by offering a wide range of courses to suit the needs of various countries.

Inti College Sarawak's success in providing such tertiary education to 5,000 students, including 2,000 overseas ones, since its inception 10 years ago was a healthy development which promised a great deal of opportunities for expansion, he said.

Earlier Inti College Sarawak chairman Datin Liliah Mohd Salleh said the college currently had over 2,000 students, including a total of 317 from Indonesia, Myanmar, Taiwan, the Phil-

ippines, Korea, Brunei, China, Japan and Hong Kong besides 270 other staffers. She said the college, which was the first in East Malaysia to receive the coveted Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) status from the Federal Government last year, had so far invested RM20 million in building infrastructure and hardware facilities.

Besides having all its courses conducted in English, she said its students had the opportunity to study for prestigious overseas degrees without leaving Sarawak, thus making enormous savings in overseas tuition and living expenses. — BERNAMA