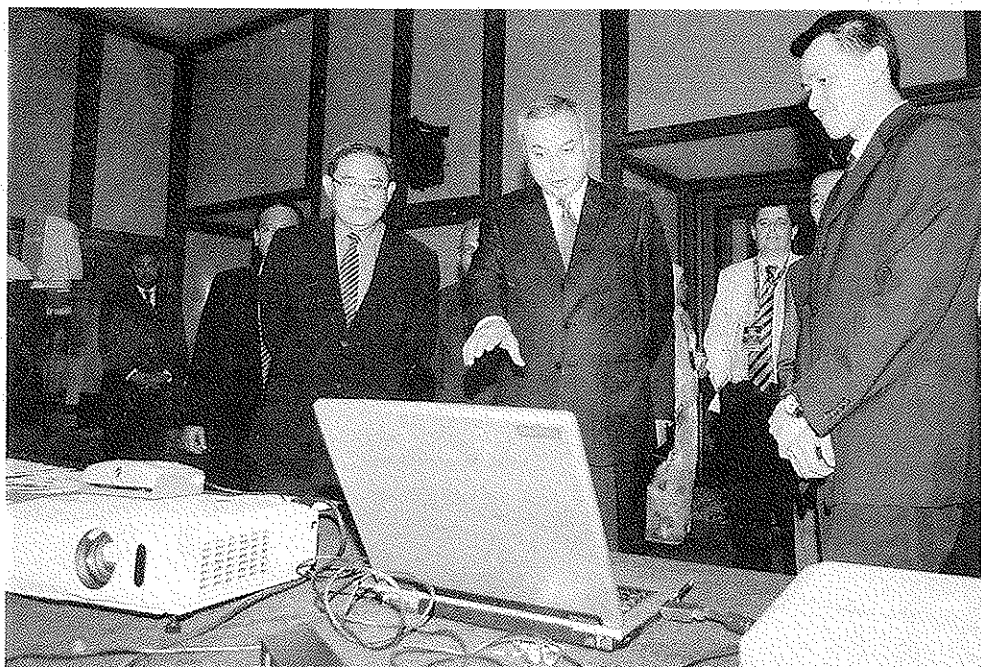




Teaching tool: Raja Nazrin asking questions about one of the gadgets on display during the International Conference on Education For All in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — Bernama

Four keys to better learning

Raja Nazrin: English is one of them

KUALA LUMPUR: The English language is one of four key aspects of the education system needing special attention to meet the demands of a knowledge and innovation-based economy, said Raja Muda of Perak Raja Dr Nazrin Shah.

The other three are the curriculum; assessment system and the teaching methods.

English, said Raja Nazrin, was of paramount importance in the 21st century workplace.

It was also the *lingua franca* of the knowledge and innovation economy, and those proficient in the language would enjoy many advantages in the global workplace, he added.

On the assessment system, Raja Nazrin said perhaps Malaysia could do with less national examinations and reduce the anxiety of teachers, school administrators and parents.

He said the examination-oriented system had also led to schools focusing on high achievers to the exclusion of underachievers, who unfortunately were usually from poorer backgrounds.

As for the curriculum, Raja Nazrin said it was too bogged down with teachers and university instructors dispensing chunks of information

to passive students.

"Perhaps it is time to reduce the amount of content disseminated and spend the extra time on developing skills and competencies needed in the 21st century," he said at the opening of the 'International Conference on Education For All' here yesterday.

Raja Nazrin said school teachers and lecturers often lamented they did not have enough time to complete the syllabus and feared reducing the content would deprive learners – without realising that, in fact, less might be more.

"The 'more' comes from students learning to inquire and discover the facts and concepts of a discipline by themselves.

"With the billions of web pages available at the click of a mouse, the earlier notions of the 'sage on the stage' may have to give way to the 'guide on the side'," he said.

On teaching learning methods and strategies, he said the focus should be on students engaging in projects, analysing case studies, solving real-world problems, making decisions in different situations, making presentations and arguing their case and constructing their own knowledge. — Bernama