

22 DEC 1996

Mahathir-Students

MEDICAL STUDENTS WITHOUT ENTRY CERTS MAY BE RECALLED, SAYS DR M

By: Zainoor Sulaiman

BANGALORE, Dec 22 (Bernama) -- Malaysian medical students here who could not get their college entry certificates may be recalled to continue their studies back home, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

This action would only be taken as a last resort because the government was still discussing with the Indian authorities to resolve the problem, he told about 200 Malaysian students at a meeting here.

About 50 second- and final-year Malaysian students at the M.S. Ramaya Medical College, including those sponsored by the government, are in a dilemma because their examination results have been withheld due to the non-issuance of the certificates of entry by the Indian Medical Council (IMC).

IMC has imposed an annual intake quota of 150 foreign students for the college but it took in 183.

Dr Mahathir said if the problem could not be settled, the government may send them to continue their studies in other colleges, including in Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir said the government hoped to reduce the number of students sent overseas by building more universities and medical colleges.

A medical college would be built in Ipoh and leading Indian medical colleges would be encouraged to set up branches in Malaysia, he said.

Teaching manpower could be recruited from India to help overcome the shortage of medical lecturers, he said.

Dr Mahathir said negotiations were being held with well-known American and European universities to get them to open branch campuses in Malaysia as part of efforts to make Malaysia a leading centre of learning.

The opening of more international universities in Malaysia would not only meet the higher education needs of Malaysians but could also cater to foreigners, he added. -- BERNAMA

ZS YBY