

02/01/1997

Our students in India to stage protest

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The 85 Malaysian students in Bangalore, who may be discharged following a court action to limit the number of foreign students in a medical college, will launch a "peaceful protest" tomorrow.

The president of the Malaysian Students Association in Bangalore, Mohd Razi Kamarulzaman, said the students in M.S. Ramaiah Medical College would be distributing leaflets to their lecturers to make them aware of their plight.

"This was decided by the association today after a meeting was held. Our lecturers were not aware of our problem and this will help them understand the anguish we are going through.

"We have already informed the Malaysian consulate in Madras about our plan and have printed about 50 leaflets," Mohd Razi told the New Straits Times in a telephone interview today.

"The leaflets will bear our association's letterhead and will contain excerpts of reports published in Malaysian newspapers.

"We need all the help we can get as our examination results have been withheld for more than two months.

"We are in a difficult position as tomorrow is the last day to register for the examinations this year. For final-year students, the examination will be their last.

"It is compulsory for students to enclose their marks' card when registering for the examination. We will, however, only get the card when we receive our results," he said.

On Oct 24 last year, the M.S. Ramaiah Medical College informed the 85 students that their results were being withheld pending a decision on a legal action taken by the Bangalore Education Board against the college for exceeding its intake of foreign students.

The Indian Supreme Court had ruled three years ago to limit the intake of foreign students, but the medical college contended that the ruling did not apply to the institution as it was governed by the bilateral memorandum of understanding on education.

Of the 85 students, 59 are Public Service Department scholarship holders. Thirty-one are in their final year.

There are 194 Malaysian students at the college.

On Dec 22 last year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had assured the students that the Government was trying its best to resolve the issue.

He said as a last resort, they would be sent to other universities or be brought back to Malaysia to complete their studies.

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