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Najib-PM

LOOK AT PM'S SHOW OF CONCERN POSITIVELY, MALAY STUDENTS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 2 (Bernama) -- Malay students should look at the Prime Minister's recent comments on the gap between their academic performance and that of non-Malay students positively, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

" The Prime Minister never intends to insult Malay students. He was just asking them to pay more attention to education because he does not want them to be left behind," he told reporters here.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was emotionally overwhelmed and had to shorten his speech at a school function in Alor Setar on July 20 when he expressed deep sadness over the ever-widening gap between the academic achievements of Malay and non-Malay students.

In between sobs and fighting back tears, Dr Mahathir said Malay students appeared to be more bothered about holding demonstrations while the non-Malays were out to seek knowledge.

He appealed to teachers to strive to narrow the gap in their students' academic performance because if allowed to widen, it would bode ill for the country politically in the future.

Najib said Malay students should not misunderstand the prime minister's message and instead should try to be more focused in their studies given the tough competition in today's labour market.

The competition would not be based only on students obtaining their degrees but also their ability to think creatively, he said.

Najib asked students not have to hang on to books, teachers and the old paradigm anymore but to pursue higher education by doing a virtual study as well.

"The differences are only on the way they study, not the content of studies because now they can use the Internet, CD-ROM, e-mail and other multimedia components," Najib said.

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