

Decision on UM's science matriculation centre rests with PM

Many professionals and lecturers are products of these centres: Aziz

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MALACCA, Tues: Whether or not Universiti Malaya's (UM) science matriculation centre is closed rests with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Education Minister Datuk Aziz Shamsuddin says.

This is based on a decision taken by the Umno Supreme Council recently, he said.

"It is now up to the PM to discuss the matter with the UM vice-chancellor," he added.

Aziz said the science centres at UM, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universiti Sains Malaysia were set up when Mahathir was the education minister.

"Dr Mahathir's intention was to bridge the gap between the number of

non-bumiputra and bumiputra science graduates. In fact, many of the professionals and lecturers in the science field today are from these centres," he said.

Aziz was speaking to reporters after receiving the Darjah Mulia Seri Melaka (DMSM) medal from the Yang diPertua Negeri, Tun Syed Ahmad Shahabuddin, at Istana Melaka here today.

On whether the case has been politicised, Aziz said the establishment of universities in Malaysia is a political issue.

"It is for political reasons that the ministry had set up more universities, otherwise, we will only have UM, which was set up by the colonialists," he said.

He added that UKM, USM, Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia were set up to give the people more opportunities to pursue higher education locally.

Aziz said the ministry's matriculation programme allows students to enrol in any local university while the science matriculation centres are more focused in preparing the students for science courses in a particular university.

"Maybe the universities concerned should limit the number of students enrolled for these science centres to 1,500 or 2,000 while the rest could enrol in matriculation centres to further their studies in other universities," he said.