

Higher pay won't change racial mix

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PM: Raising salaries and perks will not draw non-Malays to civil service

JOHOR BARU, Sat: It is not the lower incentives in the public sector that discourages non-Malays from entering government service.

So, increasing the salaries and perks in the civil service will not necessarily attract more non-Malays, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The remuneration and benefits offered by the government will always seem less attractive than those in the private sector, he told reporters after opening the MIC's 55th annual general assembly here.

He said: "Increasing wages in the public sector is not a solution to getting more non-Malays.

"I was working with the government before I left to start my own practice. But if the government increased the pay, I would still be able to hike up my charges and earn more."

He said the government will try to ensure that all races in the country are represented in the government as well as the private sector.

"We are a little bit worried because in the government service there are not many non-Malays ... not enough Chinese, not enough Indians."

Samy Vellu threatens to quit: Page 5

He acknowledged that the prospects in the public sector for the non-Malays, especially the Chinese, were not lucrative enough to lure them away from the benefits in business.

So, even if there were non-Malays in the public service, "they tend not to stay the whole course".

Indeed, he said, even non-Malay secretary-generals are now hard to find.

But he said the excuse that the opportunities are limited is not valid.

On MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu's call to the government to allocate 10% places to Indians in public universities, Mahathir said special preferences were being offered under the Third Outline Perspective Plan and the 8th Malaysia Plan.

"What the request implies is that there is a need for another special quota. We already have a bumiputra and non-bumiputra quota, but the Indians have been unhappy about being lumped together under the non-bumiputra quota," he said.

On another matter, Mahathir, who is Umno president, said the party will consider hosting the party's annual general assembly outside Kuala Lumpur if it is logistically viable.

"It is a good idea but we in Umno have many more delegates and it is a heavier task," he said.