

# ***Dr M: Present quota to stay***

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KUALA LUMPUR: The present quota for admission to local universities will remain as it is needed to balance the number of bumiputra and non-bumiputra students at tertiary level.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad explained that the 55:45 quota should not be viewed strictly in relation to students admitted to the local universities but should encompass those studying in private universities and colleges here and overseas as well.

"The majority of students in private colleges are non-bumi-

putras, so we need this quota in public universities to balance their numbers with those of bumiputra students."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said this to reporters after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting yesterday.

He said that even with the quota the actual number of bumiputra students at tertiary level was still much lower compared to non-bumiputra students.

"Umno will carry out a survey to find out the actual number of bumiputra and non-bumiputra students at tertiary

level. This will include students in private universities, colleges and those who are currently studying overseas," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the principle of the quota system in education was the same as that in economy where the Government had to step in to help balance bumiputra equity with that of non-bumiputras.

Without government intervention, he said, the target of 30% bumiputra equity in the economy could never be achieved because major corporations, unless they were owned by bumiputras, were

not keen to support bumiputra businessmen or contractors.

"In both the economic and education sectors, the quota must be viewed based on the whole scenario.

"It is also the same in the employment market. When we decide to take in more non-bumiputras into the civil service, we will need the private sector to accept more bumiputra workers to balance the situation," he added.

Dr Mahathir also expressed Umno's concern over the declining number of male Malays in universities.

Last year, only 37% of uni-

versity students were male Malays, and the percentage has declined further this year to 30%, he said.

"A special committee headed by Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad has been set up to find out why male Malays are not performing well academically and to come out with an action plan to overcome the problem.

"We are very concerned with this situation as it can lead to social problems because less-educated Malay men may find it difficult to find suitable candidates for wives in future," he added.