

# ***Ling: Dr M must have good reason for quota review***

GENTING HIGHLANDS: The Prime Minister must have had a very good reason to call for a review of the quota system for the next university intake, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said yesterday.

He said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's intentions were good because he wanted young Malay students to "wake up."

"Dr Mahathir is saddened by some students who are not in the university to study.

"Frustrations and disappointments over such students have resulted in him saying this," Dr Ling said after the Pahang MCA convention here on Saturday.

In Petaling Jaya, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu agreed with the review but said it would be difficult for Indian students to compete with the Chinese.

"If the Indians compete on merit, they will lose out and this will affect the community's future.

"We don't mind merit being used as a yardstick but there must be some specific considerations for communities which are lagging," he said.

Gerakan vice-president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said students' economic backgrounds and not purely "cold-blooded meritocracy" should be taken into consideration.

"There should be a combi-

nation of merit and need. We should consider the poor, the underprivileged and whether they are socially or physically handicapped, irrespective of their race," he said.

Dr Koh said when he was the party Youth chief, he had called for "merit but not *kulit* (skin colour), need but not creed."

"Let us give the best opportunity to someone, not because he is of a particular race, but because he is a Malaysian," he said after opening the Selangor Gerakan's delegates' conference.

"We must help those in the estates, new villages and in Sabah and Sarawak, where they are in a disadvantaged position," he said.

Dr Koh said rich bumipu-

tra students should not be given special help but those who were poor or from the lower middle class should be aided.

In Kuala Lumpur, Federation of Peninsular Malay Students Association president Datuk Suhaimi Ibrahim said education infrastructure in rural Malay areas should be improved if the Government wanted to implement a meritocracy system for university intake.

He said the shortage of English teachers, lack of secondary schools and other education infrastructure must be completed to enable the rural Malay students to be at par with urban students