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Mahathir-Bumiputera

BETTER RESULTS WILL LEAD TO MORE BUMI STUDENTS IN IPTA, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the number of bumiputera students in public institutions of higher learning (IPTA) would have exceeded the current quota if only they had better results.

He said the government wanted not only to defend but to increase the quota of places in the IPTA for bumiputera students.

"We want to raise the cut-off point from a low to a high level and eventually at par with students from other communities...we might also be able to exceed our quota," he said during a dialogue session after closing the Symposium on Reaffirming the Idealism of Undergraduates in the New Millennium at Universiti Malaya (UM) here today.

The Prime Minister, who was replying to a question from a UM student, said the government would not prevent bumiputera students from entering the IPTA even if they had exceeded their quota if they had better results.

He said the government had fixed a quota of 55 per cent of the places in the IPTA for bumiputera students and in order to meet the quota, the government had to lower the cut-off point for them.

As such, he urged bumiputera students to strive harder to get better results without depending on their quota because the government would have no problem accepting students with better results in IPTA.

Dr Mahathir had, in his speech when closing the symposium, said that the government found it difficult to increase the bumiputera quota because at present it could only be done if the government lowered further the cut-off point in order to meet the new quota.

The government could not do so because it would undermine the capability of the undergraduates once they completed their studies and gained employment.

Replying to a student from Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dr Mahathir said the government also provided assistance to Chinese students in the country.

"But whatever it is...help will be extended to the weak. If we help those who are capable of success, then the weak will be left behind," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was public knowledge that bumiputera students were still lagging students from other communities.

Even though the entry requirements into IPTA had been reduced, their number was still not enough and more support must be given to this group, he said.

He said the percentage of bumiputera students in public and private institutions of higher learning was only 25 per cent compared and the percentage would go down if the government continued to help other communities.

Due to inadequate places in the IPTA, he said the government had allowed the setting up of private institutions of higher learning (IPTs) in the country.

--BERNAMA

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