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Bumi quota can be exceeded if there are more high-achievers

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The number of Bumiputera students in public universities and colleges can exceed the present quota of 55 per cent if they get better results, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said if more Bumiputera students had good results, then the quota would not be necessary.

"Why must we limit ourselves to 55 per cent? If we have better results than others, why must the Government stop us from entering university? We want such good results that 55 per cent would not be enough to meet our needs."

Dr Mahathir was speaking to students at the Symposium on Reaffirming the Idealism of Undergraduates in the New Millennium at Universiti Malaya.

He said that to achieve the 55 per cent quota for Bumiputera students, the Government had to reduce the requirements for them to gain admission.

"If we had used meritocracy to gain entry, they would only number between 20 and 25 per cent. That means the balance 30 per cent who gained entry would be due to special provisions made by the Government by lowering the entry requirements so that they can fill up the quota of 55 per cent.

"Some ask to raise the quota. How to raise it without reducing the entry requirements? This surely does not guarantee success for us. We will always depend on ihsan (benevolence) for our education."

The Prime Minister said Bumiputeras must make greater efforts to gain knowledge and produce good results to be on par with the other races.

"The new approach is to ask yourself what you can do to succeed.

When each Malay does that, his country and religion and Malay society and race will also succeed."

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