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Mahathir-Quota

GOVT HAS NEVER BASED STUDENT QUOTA ON RACIAL COMPOSITION

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- The government has never based the quota for entrance into public institutions of higher learning on the racial composition, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We must remember our ability...we can demand a big quota of 100 per cent but if there are no people who qualify, what's the use, if no one's interested (what's the point)", the prime minister said.

He said this when asked to comment on proposals by several parties that the quota for entry into institutions of higher learning for bumiputera students be raised to 66 per cent while that for non-bumiputeras be fixed at 34 per cent based on last year's census.

This was because academicians felt that the current 55 per cent quota for bumiputeras and 45 per cent for non-bumiputeras was based on the racial ratio when the New Economic Policy was drafted over 30 years ago.

Dr Mahathir said bumiputera students were not interested in difficult academic fields and such attitude was a loss to the nation.

"They (bumiputera students) don't want to take up difficult courses, they want easy courses. (If this continues) our country will not have learned people and learned Malaysians will go to other countries (and) we will lose out," he said after attending a ceremony to commemorate Umno's struggle at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir also said that he left it to the people to decide whether the quota for bumiputera students should be maintained, increased or abolished.

He also criticised PAS for not expressing its views on the quota system.

"We know that PAS does not want to say whether there should a a quota or not because PAS (actually) wants the quota but is afraid that the DAP will not support it if it says so. So it cares more for the interest of the party than that of the Malays," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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