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Ling: No quotas for private colleges

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PUTRAJAYA, Wed. - The Cabinet today decided that there will be no quota for the intake of students to private institutions of higher learning for the time being, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

Dr Ling, who is also MCA president, said private colleges or institutes of higher learning were required to ensure that students were not admitted on the basis of their race.

However, he said, the Cabinet had taken note that these institutions should take in as many Bumiputeras as possible if they were full-paying students.

"We are very sure if that is the case, the private institutions will accept them," he told a post-Cabinet Press conference.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently had said that the Government was looking into whether a quota-based system should be implemented at all private institutions of higher learning.

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad last month also said that private institutions might one day adopt the practice of public universities in having 55 per cent Bumiputera and 45 per cent non-Bumiputera ratio in their annual student intake. The proposal was followed by debates and reactions by many parties, including academicians, politicians and the public.

Dr Ling said the MCA welcomed today's decision by the Cabinet as it would allow more students who were not accepted into public institutions to have other options.

"These are profit-based establishments so those who are willing to pay, irrespective of their race, must be accepted."

Dr Ling said the private institutes of higher learning were run by companies and the imposition of the quota system would have a bearing on their income. He said Malaysia's private colleges attracted students from countries like Indonesia, China and Thailand.

"What is important now is that there will not be any quota system in our private colleges and institutions."