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Suhakam-University

NON BUMI STUDENTS SHOULD BE GIVEN UNFILLED UNIVERSITY SEATS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 7 (Bernama) -- A member of the Malaysian Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) is optimistic the government will offer immediately unfilled university seats, reserved for Bumiputeras, to non-Bumiputera top scorers.

Datuk Lee Lam Thye reasoned that it would be a loss to the nation if universities in other countries offered places to these bright non-Bumiputera students.

"At a time when our nation requires talents to accelerate the new era of information and communication technology and was working towards a fully-developed status, we cannot afford a brain drain," he said in a statement.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday the government may waive the quota reserved for Bumiputera students in institutions of higher learning to make way for intelligent non-Bumiputera students.

There are about 7,168 unfilled seats under the Bumiputera quota while there are about 500 non-Bumiputera students who scored excellent results but could not secure a place in local universities.

Lee lauded the Prime Minister's statement, saying both bumiputeras and non-bumiputeras must not be denied places in universities and institutions of higher learning.

Meanwhile, Parti Rakyat Malaysia said in a separate statement that a review must be undertaken to amend the Federal Constitution as it was not clear on what should be done in instances when the Bumiputera quota cannot be filled if there was no takers.

Its President Dr Syed Husin Ali said the constitution only made reference to a situation where the number of applicants exceeded the seats available but the situation was the reverse today.

"The Federal Constitution does not give a clear guideline to overcome this situation. An amendment to the quota system must be made gradually according to changing needs," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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