

Bumi intake up in

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Admission based for the first time on meritocracy

varsities

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — The intake of Bumiputera students into public higher educational institutions, which is based for the first time on meritocracy, increased to 68.9 per cent this year for Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia holders.

The increase is higher by 13.9 per cent from the previous quota system.

Higher education director Prof Dr Hassan Said said 26.4 per cent of the 32,752 places offered by the institutions would be taken up by Chinese students and 4.7 per cent by Indians.

Speaking at a Press conference today, Hassan, when asked on the improvement in the academic performance of Bumiputera students, said this could be the result of "psychological effect" following Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's announcement of the introduction of the merit system.

He said the merit system was implemented across the board for all courses and in all faculties.

On the intake of students in critical courses like medicine and sciences, Hassan said it was quite balanced among the races.

In Kertih, Dr Mahathir, when commenting on the matter, said the situation could be temporary.

"This is because the non-Bumiputeras are somehow or other avoiding taking the STPM and naturally the number of Bumiputera (entering public universities) will be bigger."

Dr Mahathir said the situation could change because non-Bumiputeras would now be required to take the STPM to enter public universities. Based on the merit system, 22,557 Bumiputera STPM holders were offered places in 11 public universities and six university colleges, while the number of successful Chinese candidates were 8,665 and Indians 1,530.

Previously, the student intake was on a race-based quota system.

Bumiputeras were allocated 55 per cent of the places offered while Chinese took up 35 per cent and 10 per cent for Indians.

However, there was a huge difference in the number of applicants among the races.

Some 46,878 Bumiputeras applied compared with 13,485 Chinese and 3,961 Indians.

On the number of Chinese students eligible this year being even lower compared to the quota given to them in previous years, Hassan said: "The number of Chinese applicants is low. In my personal opinion, non-Bumiputera students are entering private colleges and taking up twinning programmes."

On the intake of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia holders for first degree courses, Hassan said 2,690 were offered places — of which 1,272 or 47.3 per cent were Bumiputera, 1,207 (44.9 per cent) were Chinese and 211 (7.8 per cent) were Indians.

Only Universiti Teknologi Malaysia is offering the programmes for SPM holders. A total of 127,572 had applied which means the applications by 124,882 students had been rejected due to limited places.

Hassan said there was a possibility that some of these students were high achievers.

The Ministry has also allowed the applicants to name eight course options compared to five previously to ensure that they were given a course of their choice.

The decision to introduce meritocracy in university entry was made following a public outcry last year. Under the merit system, students were put in a single list instead of three previously for each race. A student's place in the list would depend solely on his academic achievement.

A computer system was used to select eligible students based on how high they were in the list.

Merit is based solely on the academic achievement of students. Co-curricular activities are no longer taken into consideration unlike previous years when they took up 10 points.

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Cut-off points for all courses raised

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Co-curricular activities would only be taken into account if more than one student had the same academic points and a decision had to be made as to who was eligible.

Hassan said cut-off points for all courses were also increased in line with the merit system. Asked if the cut-off points would be made public, he said the Ministry was compiling them.

On whether those who had undergone matriculation programmes and STPM holders were put on the same list, Hassan replied in the affirmative, adding that the Ministry had a special formula and experts to help streamline the entry from the two streams into university.

Breakdown of University Entry for SPM leavers (for first degree courses)



Race	Science	Arts	Total
Bumiputera	1,230 (48.1%)	42 (31.7%)	1,272 (47.3%)
Chinese	1,115 (43.6%)	92 (68.3%)	1,207 (44.9%)
Indians	211 (8.3%)	0 (0%)	211 (7.8%)
Total	2,556	134	2,690

Race	Science	Arts	Total
Bumiputera	14,331 (69.0%)	8,226 (68.6%)	22,557 (68.9%)
Chinese	5,753 (27.7%)	2,912 (24.3%)	8,665 (26.4%)
Indians	685 (3.3%)	845 (7.1%)	1,530 (4.7%)