

12/11/2002

Mara head to discuss non-Bumiputeras' lukewarm response to MRSMs

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Mara chairman Datuk Abu Seman Yusop said today he was willing to meet and discuss with any party about the lukewarm response to places offered for non-Bumiputera students in Mara junior science colleges (MRSMs).

He said he was adopting an open approach on the matter as the move was aimed at fostering good relations among the races.

"We are willing to discuss the issue and find a solution. We have placed advertisements in newspapers about places offered in MRSMs but the response from non-Bumiputera students has not been encouraging."

He was commenting on a statement by MCA Youth head Datuk Ong Tee Keat, who said yesterday that the movement would seek a meeting with Mara to discuss the lukewarm response.

Ong said that although the Government allocated 500 seats for non-Bumiputera students to enter Form Four at MRSM, only 251 sat the qualifying test.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had in June said that a 10 per cent quota would be allocated to non-Bumiputeras for matriculation courses in public universities and MRSMs. He said the move was aimed at fostering racial integration and national unity.

Meanwhile, MIC Youth head S.A. Vigneswaran said the movement planned to conduct a nationwide drive to educate Indians about the opportunity to study at MRSMs. He said the movement's education bureau had been asked to conduct a study to identify the reasons for the lukewarm response. He said one reason could be ignorance on the part of parents and the students.