

Musa: Merit system at varsities to stay

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KUALA LUMPUR: Meritocracy will rule where the allocation of seats for courses at local public universities is concerned.

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad said the government has decided that the merit system will be a permanent policy and that the details will soon be announced by the ministry's Higher Education Department.

Musa was speaking to reporters at the ministry's Education Technology

Division after delivering his New Year message to ministry staff.

Last year, the quota system in public universities was replaced by one based on merit. Subsequently, there was an increase in the number of bumiputra students in the majority of critical courses.

The number of bumiputras accepted into courses such as medicine, accountancy and engineering was reported to have increased to more than 65% of the overall intake.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in May, said the government would carry out a study on whether meritocracy, or a new sys-

tem combined with the quota system, could be used for the admission of students into local public universities this year to ensure that all races were treated fairly.

Earlier in his speech, Musa said all information and communications technology equipment, including notebooks and laser compact discs, have been supplied to teachers throughout the country.

"A total of 27,543 teachers, including those of Chinese and Tamil schools, have undergone the English proficiency training through a two-day on-site and five-day full immersion session," he added.