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Mahathir-Education

PARENTS AND TEACHERS CAN ENSURE THAT BUMIPUTERA STUDENTS EXCEL

KUALA LUMPUR, May 22 (Bernama) -- Parents and teachers can play a significant role to ensure that bumiputera students excel in the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia examination so that they can enter public institutions of higher learning (IPTA) in the country, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said although many bumiputera students had the qualifications for entry into the IPTAs, they were still insufficient to ensure that they earned a place in the universities.

"Although a large number of them (students) are qualified to enrol into the universities, only those who have excellent results are accepted," he said at a media conference after chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting, here today.

He said this was among the matters discussed at the meeting today.

The number of bumiputera students eligible to enter the 17 IPTAs this year was 23,182 out of the total of 37,034 students selected to study at the IPTAs nationwide, which was a reduction from 68.9 per cent last year to 62.6 per cent.

Dr Mahathir said: "That's why I hope parents and teachers will strive so that bumiputera students obtain good results."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said when the government announced that it would select students for entry into the public universities based on meritocracy two years ago, non-bumiputera students had worked harder to get better results.

The Prime Minister said that was why students with good results did not get the discipline that they had chosen because there were other students who had better results applying for the same discipline.

Dr Mahathir said the government also wanted to streamline the number of students in any particular discipline to suit the needs of the country.

Dr Mahathir said the move to increase the number of doctors, for example, had to be made in line with the increase in the number of nurses and pharmacies so that the country's development would be balanced.

In addition, the government also wanted to emphasise to the students that there were various other fields such as accountancy, aeronautics and so on that they could go into, he said.

On the measures taken by Singapore to impose several conditions for students from countries affected by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Dr Mahathir said these did not only involve students from Malaysia but also other countries including Hong Kong.

Malaysia, he said, did not impose such conditions on students from countries affected by SARS.

The Singapore government had announced on May 16 that all students of national schools, technical education institutes, polytechnics and universities who were holidaying abroad were compelled to undergo several additional measures upon returning to their place of studies next month.

Among the new measures announced by the Singapore Education Ministry was that foreign students who were just returning from countries affected by SARS to re-apply for student passes if they wished to continue their studies in the island republic.

The application was subject to the requirement that the local sponsors (if necessary) must sign an agreement for full responsibility on the cost of treatment and reimburse the government for all expenses if the students

concerned were imposed with the house quarantine order.

-- BERNAMA

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