

28 AUG 2003

Youth-Education

UMNO YOUTH REACHING OUT TO CREATE AWARENESS ON EDUCATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 28 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth will intensify programmes to create greater awareness on the importance of education, especially among primary school pupils and parents.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said this was aimed at keeping the education agenda of the Malays on track.

"Umno Youth will go to the ground to create early awareness in primary schools on the importance of education, skills and knowledge, and to give guidance through the Golden Tuition Programme for English, Mathematics and Science," he told reporters after a ceremony to sign letters of undertaking on Umno Youth's Education Fund loan facility here today.

He said this when asked how Umno Youth would respond to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's dare to the younger generation of males to increase their enrolment at local institutions of higher learning to bring the gender ratio to 50:50.

The Prime Minister, when opening the Universiti Teknologi Mara Merdeka Festival on Tuesday, said that the current ratio was 70:30 in favour of female students.

Students and parents would also be told that joining the work force immediately after school would not be the best option although it might seem attractive, he said.

They would have a better future by going for higher education and acquiring skills and more knowledge, he said.

He said the movement would also focus on increasing the number of Bumiputera students in private colleges and helping to overcome the problem of unemployment among graduates due to a mismatch between their course specialisation and market demands.

On the loan facility, he said the RM6.4 million Education Fund would be used to finance about 700 students.

The fund was set up with the cooperation of 19 colleges under the Malaysian Private Colleges Association and another 19 under the National Association of Private Educational Institutes.

At the moment, 19 students have been given loans totalling RM850,000 -- six taking degree courses, 10 diploma courses and three A-Level programmes.

-- BERNAMA

HS AHH YBY