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Campus election conduct `shows student immaturity'

THE conduct of campus elections in the country shows that most of the students are immature, Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad said yesterday.

He said this was because the elections in local universities were based on political inclinations and not on proper issues such as student welfare.

He said in developed countries, student elections were often based on "solid characters" who concentrated on issues affecting students.

Speaking at the Parliament lobby, he said the ministry had no official data as to whether pro-opposition candidates were gaining a stronghold in local universities.

He was commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's criticism of undergraduates of Universiti Malaya, where pro-opposition student candidates had won 26 of the 39 seats in campus elections.

Dr Mahathir had also said the students risked having their scholarships and loans revoked if they failed to produce results.

Musa said in general, the opposition had tried to distract students from their studies but there was no official data to show whether students were more pro-opposition or pro-government.

"The practice is that we do not encourage groups with certain ideologies, whether pro-opposition or pro-government," he said.

However, he said, if pro-government candidates won seats in campus elections, it was a healthy development.

He said campus elections would continue as the authorities had no intention to stop what was a necessity and a time-honoured practice.