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300 non-Bumis apply for MRSM places

MASJID TANAH, Sat. - Mara has received 300 applications from non-Bumiputera students to take up 260 places reserved for them in Form One at Mara Junior Science Colleges (MRSM).

A total of 16,000 applications were received from Bumiputera students.

Mara chairman Datuk Wira Abu Seman Yusop said he was disappointed that non-Bumiputera students were not interested in studying at MRSM.

"This happens even though this is the second year we are opening our doors to non-Bumiputera students," he said after attending an Entrepreneurship Seminar at Institut Kemahiran Mara in Pengkalan Balak today.

"Mara was hoping there would be more applications following the changes made by the agency and the Entrepreneur Development Ministry to place non-Bumiputera students in five colleges instead of 30 nation-wide."

Abu Seman said Mara would not be extending the deadline for non-Bumiputera applications.

Mara, he added, would have to select from the 300 applications received.

"Those who sent in applications have a 86 per cent chance of being selected."

In June 2002, then Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the Government's decision to allocate 10 per cent of the places in various MRSM for non-Bumiputera students. The move was intended to improve racial integration.

Abu Seman had said last week that five MRSMs would be allowed to take in up to 30 per cent of non-Bumiputera students next year.

He said instead of having 10 per cent non-Bumiputera students in each of its 30 MRSM nationwide, it would be better to have a higher number of non-Bumiputeras in a smaller number of colleges.

The non-Bumiputera students are likely to be placed in five colleges in Pontian, Muar, Kuala Kubu Baru, Kulim and Kuala Lipis.