

## **30% increase in non-Malay students 'a positive move'**

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A 30 per cent increase in the intake of non-Malay students at the Royal Military College (RMC) is in line with the 1Malaysia concept introduced by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

The increase, suggested by the prime minister, was seen by many, especially former RMC students, as a major and important step for RMC, since there were only about five per cent non-Malay students in Forms Four and Five, previously.

Former RMC student Guardial Singh Nijar, 62, a University Malaya law faculty professor said the move was both positive and highly commendable as it would help overcome the racial imbalance and be a platform for racial integration, in line with the 1Malaysia concept introduced by Najib.

"When I was in RMC from 1961-64, there were only eight non-Malay students and the criteria for entry was very stringent.

"Our relationship with the others was very cordial and there was no such thing as 'racist' sentiments in our interaction," he told Bernama.

Michael Tan Yew Lay, 66, another old boy of RMC from 1958 to 1962 said increasing the number of non-Malay students would further enhance the integration of all races, in line with the 1Malaysia concept.

"During my 'batch' there were about 15 non-Malay students and our relationship remains intact with the others although it has been about 50 years since we left RMC.

"My son is also an RMC old boy (1989) and I always encouraged him to join RMC because it was a place where patriotism for the country and love for one another was taught without racial bias," said Tan who is also the honorary secretary of the Old Putera Association Royal Military College.

Hyundai Corporation legal adviser Jeyaganesh Gopalsamy, 36, another RMC old boy from 1987 to 1991 said the prime minister's call for such a move was a major development involving non-Malays in the field of education.

"RMC is a unique institution whereby racial integration is at a very high level. We interact like family members in an environment that cannot be found elsewhere.

"There (RMC), we value friendship and till today, we keep in touch with one another just like the old days," he told Bernama when contacted.

Another former RMC student (1969-1972), Abu Bakar Mohd Nor, 56, said an increase in the intake on non-Malay students would promote a healthy competition among students to excel.

Abu Bakar said RMC was an institution where there was no such thing as 'race' because there was so much respect for each other and their respective cultures.

"During my years, we mixed around with everybody very freely (no such thing as colour or race). Even the Chinese wore the 'kain pelikat' just like a Malay.

"What was important then, was to excel in education," he said.

- *Bernama*

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