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Press Digest

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varsities

needed: MCA

The Sun - 21/3/2007

MCA Youth secretary-general and education bureau chief Dr Wee Ka Siong said the government should build more universities in tandem with the rise in the number of students applying for places in public universities.

Asked by *Sin Chew Daily* to comment on Education Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed's disclosure last week that 135,000 school leavers are fighting for some 70,000 places in public universities, Wee said: "The government needs to build more universities to give qualified students the chance to pursue higher education."

However, he said, the government must first ensure there are enough tutors of high calibre.

"Many science and technology courses are conducted in English. There is need for the government to make adjustment in this aspect, to follow the example of Singapore, to bring in foreign professionals as tutors," he said.

MCA education bureau chief Datuk Lee Sing Chooi expects the government to set up or allow for the setting up of more public and private higher learning institutions in line with its objective to turn Malaysia into a centre of education excellence.

This will provide better opportunities for local students to pursue higher education.

He said with more and more students scoring straight As in their public examinations, it is imperative for them to also excel in their extra-curricular activities to gain that little edge they need to ensure a place in public universities.

On the possibility that more Chinese candidates would be left out of public universities this year, he said the number of Chinese applying to enter local public universities had, in fact, dropped over the years mainly because more opted to go overseas or enrol with private local universities or colleges.