

**MIC leader wants varsity quotas reintroduced, says meritocracy system broken
Malaysian Insider**

July 27 , 2013

BY V. ANBALAGAN, ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Putrajaya should reintroduce the quota system when allocation places in public universities as the meritocracy system has failed and is disadvantageous to the poor, MIC treasurer-general Senator Datuk Jaspal Singh said today.

He also said the current system was not transparent, leading to the recent chorus of complaints among a number of top-scoring students.

"It is broken. No one understands how places are allocated under it," the MIC leader said in a statement in Kuala Lumpur today.

Jaspal said this year's intake saw many students with 4.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) not getting courses of their choice or not being given places at all.

He said the quota system would ensure that places were allocated in a way that did not disadvantage those from poor and rural backgrounds, while ensuring top performers were enrolled into courses of their choice.

He suggested that students be accepted into university based on the A-levels as well as Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) and Matriculation.

"If foreign students could be accepted, then so should be Malaysians. If that means the scrapping of the STPM, so be it," Jaspal said.

He pointed out that only 442 of the 51,673 students who sat for the STPM received 4.0 CGPA and the authorities should make a special effort to retain them in Malaysia.

"Instead, they are rejected and ignored. What then is the use of Talentcorp spending RM65 million to bring back talented Malaysians?" he asked.

However, he lauded Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's statement that he would request the education ministry to review this year's university intake.

Jaspal said he had also requested Najib to offer scholarships to students with 4.0 CGPA to pursue their preferred courses in private universities if they did not get places in public universities.

In the past 20 years, he said the number of Indian students being accepted into public universities has declined. Until recently, the only way an Indian student could enter university was to sit for the STPM.

He said after many passionate representations to the prime minister's office by a special MIC team, Najib last year announced that 1,500 Indian students would be given matriculation places.

"The prime minister's generous offer gave great hope to many Indians, not only that more of them would make it to university but that the state recognised the suffering of the Indian people," Jaspal said.

However, he said the 1,500 number was not met last year.

"We were given the excuse that it was the first year of the programme. This year the number was again not met and only 1,142 places were given to Indians," he said.

Jaspal said he now wanted the education ministry to provide the exact number of Indian students who had been accepted into matriculation and the percentages by location.

"I have also proposed that a special committee comprising ministry officials and representatives from the Indian community be formed to oversee this matter," he said, adding that he hoped to receive the answers next week during the on-going Dewan Negara proceedings. - July 27, 2013

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