

**MIC Push To Enhance Academic Achievement Of Indian Students**  
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PUTRAJAYA, Aug 26 (Bernama) -- The MIC is to step up efforts to draw more Indian school leavers to take up pre-diploma courses for entry into polytechnics under the Changing the Destiny of Malaysian Indian Children (MDAIM) programme.

MIC president Datuk Seri G. Palanivel said students with potential should be made aware of this opportunity open to them, especially those from low-income families who had only three credits in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination.

Palanivel, who is the natural resources and environment minister, said that at a meeting with the director-general of the Department of Polytechnic Education, Datuk Mohlis Jaafar, on Monday, he was informed that of the 2,090 students who applied to join the programme, 801 were offered places and 268 had registered at polytechnics.

"This is important because we have to strengthen the academic achievement of those students with only three (SPM) credits with skills training," he told a news conference after a meeting with officers from the Department of Polytechnic Education, here. Deputy Education Minister P. Kamalanathan was also present at the meeting.

The MDAIM programme was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak last February.

"The prime minister announced an allocation of RM500 million for skills training, with RM50 million especially for skills training in the estates. We have to make sure all this money goes to the right place," Palanivel said.

Besides the provision of lodging, the programme exempts students from having to pay fees and they get a RM250 monthly allowance from the government.

Palanivel said the government targeted 1,600 Indian students for assistance to attend the programme annually. Applications for the December session are open until Oct 1.

He said that going by the target, there was much room for the intake of more Indian students for the programme.

"We have done a lot to draw students to the programme. We will step up our efforts. Perhaps, have more advertisements or create a special website on the programme," he added.

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