

## **DPM Reassures Public Varsities Not Allowed to Raise Study Fees**

**Bernama**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today reiterated the government's promise not to allow the public universities to increase the study fees for their undergraduates.

The deputy prime minister said the promise was made for the sake of the students' welfare although the allocation for the higher education sector was reduced in the 2016 Budget.

"The drop of about RM2.4 billion (from the previous year's) for the Higher Education Ministry should not be made an excuse by public universities to raise their fees.

"I believe this factor will not be an obstacle to the progress and development of these universities. In fact, a reduced budget this time could be a blessing in disguise for its potential of showing the resilience of public universities in facing the current economic challenges."

Ahmad Zahid said this at the opening of the National Undergraduates Leadership Conference (Pemanas), here, Sunday. His speech text was read out by his political secretary, Dr Ahmad Masrizal Muhammad.

He said that since two years ago, the ministry had given the mandate to the public universities to seek 30 per cent of the funding on their own.

Ahmad Zahid said he was confident that the higher education institutions could cope with the situation and see this as a new challenge.

"Indeed, this is the time for the universities to double their efforts in generating income on their own to help bear their expenditure," he added.

On another note, Ahmad Zahid stressed that young people should imbibe the elements of innovation and creativity in order to be successful entrepreneurs.

"Today, innovation has become so important and critical in determining the level of progress and development of any civilisation.

"The success of a country or society also depends a lot on creative and innovative leadership," he said.

He added that the future generations must have a high level of social consciousness and be smart in gauging the communal, societal and national environment.

The programme was participated by 250 undergraduates from various public higher education institutions as a platform for them to exchange views and ideas on national transformation.

It was organised in conjunction with the UMNO General Assembly 2015 which will be held next week.

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