

'Select Bumis willing to achieve business goals'

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KOTA KINABALU: The Government must find bumiputeras who are willing to take and accept risks and be willing to achieve their entrepreneurship goals before funds are spent.

"Otherwise the funds will go to waste," said Universiti Malaysia Sabah lecturer Prof. Dr. Syed Azizi Wafa Syed Khalid Wafa, adding, "millions of ringgit are being spent but on the wrong individuals who are not suited to run a business."

He said the Government should therefore be more selective in picking bumiputera entrepreneurs when it enrolls them in entrepreneurial programmes and gives assistance including financial help.

"The Government has to be selective about who it puts in entrepreneurial development programmes so it becomes more proper and progressive in any (entrepreneurial) activities that is carried out.

"If the Government wants to promote entrepreneurship among the Malays and bumiputeras then there must screening procedures in place."

He said this after delivering his lecture entitled "Management Styles of Malaysian Managers- A Cross-cultural Perspective" at the UMS Recital Hall.

Syed Azizi of the UMS Faculty of Business Economics and Accountancy said currently the (entrepreneurial) courses are open to any bumiputeras who wish to enrol.

"Currently the procedure is if they come, we will just sign them up. So



Syed Azizi (left) with Mohd Harun.

when it comes to giving financing or aid, we don't see their personality, so sometimes it (screening to be imposed) be seen as discriminatory.

"I understand why the Government doesn't want to do it (discriminate) where if a person wants (financial aid), but can't afford (get it), so in the end, they will complain about it ... so it can be difficult to set up such tests to screen candidates. But I am confident that there are other ways of shortlisting the right candidates.

On his lecture, Syed Azizi said the study was comparison between bumiputera and non bumiputera managers where he found that cultural background plays a key role (in determining their management style).

He said the Malay culture as a whole is a collective culture with less emphasis on individualism and being risk adverse

while Chinese culture is simply the opposite with them being risk takers and being more individualistic.

"For the Malays (due to their collective culture background), they tend to be risk adverse compared to the Chinese.

"That is why statistical data have shown that 1.2 million government servants are Malays and bumiputeras as there are no risks involved where the risk of them being laid off is low and everything is laid out and predictable.

"However when you talk about setting up a business there is always the element of uncertainty and risk. So when the risk is high, it leads to Malays feeling uncomfortable about setting up their own business."

According to Syed Azizi the beliefs, attitudes and values of individuals are the core elements that form the culture of a society and as such conditions how a person behaves. What was discovered was that there were more differences than similarities between the management styles of Malay and Chinese managers in Malaysia.

UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr Mohd. Harun Abdullah meanwhile said such lectures (as those given by Syed Azizi) were an academic culture practised in any university where professors carry out lectures in their various fields.

"In UMS, we practise this culture and such academic lectures will be carried out from time to time where by the end of this year there will be having another premier lecture by the end of the year by another professor in another discipline," he said.