

UMS student leader welcomes political free campus election

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KUALA LUMPUR: Three student leaders from public universities welcomed Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik's statement on allowing campus elections that are free from any influential political parties or individuals.

Student Representative Council (MPP) President of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Muhd Jivean Johan Wira said free and fair campus election provides exposure to students on the electoral system and the democratic process practiced in the country.

"However, in the context of today's students, I think that college students should be given more space and freedom to evaluate things. This is because the university is one of the academic spots, a place of exposure to the pros and cons of the political system," he told Bernama.

Jivean said if the influence and ideology of certain political parties entered the campus's political

sphere, then there would be no room and freedom for students to express themselves.

"The government today needs to place its trust on the students in making choices. The context of student empowerment needs to be raised to a higher level at university or national level," he added.

Meanwhile, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) student leader Mohammad Izzudin Rosli said the concept of a party-free campus election can ensure that contestants were not compromised by any party from outside, regardless of government or opposition parties.

"Whether it is influenced or not by any political party, what most campus elections should produce are students of calibre to lead and assist university management in ensuring the welfare of the students," said the university's student council president.

University Malaya 2018/2019 caretaker student council

president Mohamed Shafiee said the influence of outside political parties would make the students as followers rather than leaders.

He said, it's time for campus election to serve as a platform for students to abandon the subservient culture.

"Therefore, if the government agrees with the party free campus election, the realization of student unity in the campus could be accelerated. The position holders in the student unions are far more significant than representatives of the representative office," he said.

He added, the influence of political parties in the campus would also 'obscure' the understanding of students' to see what the students really needed.

'It will be better if all the representatives avoid bringing anything related to the party's name. Just carry your own name and portfolio in student elections,' he said. - Bernama