



Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (centre) receiving a pledge for 5,000 books from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Zaini Ujang at the Matriculation Open Day programme at Kedah Matriculation College yesterday. With them is Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Mohd Johari Baharom (left). — NST picture by Shahrizal Md Noor

'UPM can defuse tension by meeting students'

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HANGLUN: The management of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has been urged to resolve issues surrounding the university's campus election, which triggered a scuffle between two groups of students two days ago.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin also advised its student affairs department to conduct a *musyawarah* (discussion) with unhappy students for an amicable solution over the problem.

He said it was important for the university to defuse tension from jangling the campus election.

"It is a serious matter and the uni-

versity should look into the dispute over its campus election.

"All parties should discuss and find the best solution to avoid dissension among the students that would cause instability.

"Besides solving the issue, I hope the discussion would strengthen the relationship between the university and its students in the future."

Muhyiddin was asked to comment on the fight between two camps of students, which injured two security guards at the university in Serdang, Selangor.

When asked if actions would be taken against the students, Muhyiddin said he would leave it to the university to decide.

Asked about claims that the opposition had interfered with the cam-

pus elections, he said he was unsure, but added that the students were exposed to many ideas and opinions.

He said campus elections were a normal process for universities, where students would vote for candidates to represent them in affairs, including education and welfare.

Students involved in the election process are required to follow guidelines imposed by the universities' student affairs department.

"If all parties follow the guidelines, there would be no unwanted incident such as the one that had happened in UPM. This incident must be avoided as it would not paint a good picture of our universities."

It was reported that the tension started on Tuesday night following an unofficial announcement of the re-

sults of the campus election.

One group of students, who are candidates for Pro-Aspirasi, objected to the 11 seats won by the Pro-Mahasiswa group, claiming that the latter had campaigned as a group.

Following the incident, several Pro-Mahasiswa representatives met the university's deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs and alumni) Prof Dr Fauzi Ramlan to appeal over the objection by the Pro-Aspirasi group on Wednesday.

Four representatives from the group, who met Fauzi, later said the objections against the 11 candidates had been overruled. This angered the Pro-Aspirasi students and a scuffle broke out.

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'Outsiders may have incited fracas'

SERDANG: Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) believes the student fracas in its campus on Wednesday may have been incited by outsiders.

UPM deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs and alumni) Prof Dr Fauzi Ramlan said students from other universities, who had joined the UPM students' gathering, might have aggravated the situation.

"The student affairs department and UPM students had followed the standard operating procedures for campus elections. We had investigated complaints lodged by students via the proper channels," he said at UPM's Karnival Kesedaran Kanser (3K) 2011, here, yesterday.

Fauzi said the department had received a complaint that 10 Pro-Mahasiswa candidates had breached the contest rules.

"We checked and found that the candidates were working within the parameters of the election process and the complaint was dismissed."

Fauzi said he spent several hours yesterday for students to air their grievances, but no one came forward. Fauzi will meet the 42 candidates today to congratulate and brief them on their elected duties, adding that the new student cabinet would be formed in Monday.

A glass door in the administrative building was smashed and two security guards injured in a clash between students and security personnel. Police are investigating the incident.

At the carnival, five booklets on breast cancer was launched.

UPM vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Radin Umar Radin Sohadi said about 40 per cent of cancer was preventable by observing a healthy lifestyle.

"Besides genetic reasons, we can control our diet and environment to reduce cancer risk."

Having survived cancer last year, Radin also said having the right information also helps cancer sufferers to deal with the disease.

The carnival also saw the launch of a cancer support hotline called "Kahelpline". The public can call 1800-2222-33 from 8.30am to 4.30pm (Mondays to Fridays).

The hotline was a collaboration between UPM, private sectors and non-governmental organisations, and sponsored by TM Net.