

## Higher Education Access Must Align With National Education Policy, Unity Goals - Zambrzy

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KUALA LUMPUR- The government is adopting a balanced, inclusive and responsible approach in its efforts to expand access to national higher education as part of building a common meeting point for Malaysia's diverse society. Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambrzy Abd Kadir said the commitment must nevertheless remain aligned with efforts to uphold the foundations of the National Education Policy and the National Education Philosophy.

According to him, in a sovereign nation, education cannot be viewed only through academic demands or the interests of certain groups. He said education also involves nation-building, strengthening unity, empowering Bahasa Melayu as the national language, and understanding Malaysia's history and nationhood. Therefore, the government cannot change the foundations of the national education system simply to satisfy any particular educational stream. He was responding to a statement by the Federation of Malaysian Chinese School Management Associations (Dong Zong) on May 15, which claimed the government failed to reflect educational justice towards UEC graduates. Zambrzy described the claim as misguided and irresponsible. He said educational streams seeking broader access to public institutions must be willing to operate within the national framework. The government must defend principles and policies that form the basis of national identity and unity. He added that allowing UEC holders to apply to public universities for selected Chinese language and literature courses, with credits in Bahasa Melayu and History in SPM, was an inclusive and responsible approach. This decision respects the framework of the National Education Policy. He stressed that the position of Bahasa Melayu and History cannot be compromised. These principles must be implemented consistently and cannot change due to political pressure. Malaysia's future, he said, depends on unity through a common language, shared history, and nationhood. Public universities are national institutions governed by national policies. The government has the right to impose conditions to preserve standards and harmony. He concluded that inclusiveness should not come at the expense of the nation's core policies.

