

"Prioritise Meritocracy Not Quota System" — Says UTeM Royal Education Award Recipient

"I'm representing not just my story, but the shared narrative of minorities," he said.



By [Melissa Alvina](#) — 21 Nov 2023, 04:04 PM

A Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) graduate has garnered attention for his powerful speech addressing the issue of racial quotas in Malaysian universities

Honoured with the prestigious Royal Education Award during UTeM's 19th convocation ceremony, Nahvin Muthusamy used the opportunity to emphasise the significance of providing equal opportunities to students, irrespective of their family, social, and racial backgrounds.

The Bachelor of Computer Science graduate asserted that the government and public universities should practise meritocracy over divisive quotas.

"We need to prioritise meritocracy in the education system, instead of the quota system introduced by the political parties that divides us as a nation," he said.



During his speech, Nahvin recounted a story about his deceased friend from secondary school, who failed to secure a spot in matriculation

Nahvin said that his friend had earned just one less 'A' than himself in SPM.

He went on to share that upon entering matriculation, he was surprised to find students with academic results lower than his friend's.

"My friend is no more. But I can assure you all that if he was given the same opportunity as me, he would be the one giving the speech this morning, not me," he said.

Nahvin concluded his speech by hoping that the Ministry of Higher Education would prioritise meritocracy to ensure fairness and equal opportunities for all deserving candidates in the future.

He said embracing a fair education system would also foster unity among Malaysians.



Image via [Nahvin Muthusamy](#) (Provided to SAYS)

In a conversation with SAYS, Nahvin shared that the topic of equal education for all is one that's close to his heart as he comes from a poor social background

"I've worked hard to be a voice for the silenced, and I hope the Ministry of Higher Education hears our call for a fair Malaysia," he also wrote on [Instagram](#) while sharing a video of his convocation speech.

"[I'm] representing not just my story, but the shared narrative of minorities.

"I dared to express what was considered unspeakable, even if it meant courting controversy because I believe in a greater cause," he added.

The 23-year-old student told SAYS that he has consistently earned a spot on the Dean's List every semester, and has even been honoured with two Student Appreciation Awards.

Nahvin shared that his father, Muthusamy, suffered a stroke five years ago, which meant his 55-year-old mother, Vasuntha Devi, who works as a rubber tapper, has been the sole provider for the family.

"Without her efforts and sacrifices, I definitely would not be here," he said.

"But she taught me a lesson I carry till today: 'Life is not fair. You cannot have everything that someone has. But if you work hard then you can change it'. And I have never stopped working hard," shared the student.



Image via [Nahvin Muthusamy](#) (Provided to SAYS)