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MALACCA, FEB. 28 (BERNAMA) -- THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS STARTED A CENTRAL REGISTER TO LIST ALL THE TEACHERS IN SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

THE MINISTER, DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED, SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE HERE TODAY THAT FROM THE CENTRAL REGISTER THE MINISTRY WOULD BE ABLE TO KNOW THE EXACT NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN SERVICE, THOSE WHO WERE TEMPORARY TEACHERS AND WHERE AND WHAT SUBJECTS THEY WERE TEACHING.

SUCH INFORMATION WOULD BE VERY USEFUL TO THE MINISTRY IN ITS FUTURE PLANNING.

HE SAID THE NUMBER OF TEMPORARY TEACHERS NOW GIVEN AS 12,000 WAS ONLY AN ESTIMATE.

THE MINISTRY WOULD EMPHASISE ON PROJECTS THAT COULD BENEFIT A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CHILDREN.

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS TO REPLACE SOME OLD SCHOOLS WOULD HAVE TO BE DELAYED TO DIVERT THE MONEY FOR HIGHER PRIORITY PROJECTS. -- BERNAMA MORE 1422/ZCM

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LAST NIGHT, AT A MEETING WITH UMNO DIVISIONAL COMMITTEES AND EDUCATION BUREAUX, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE MALAYSIAN EDUCATION POLICY WAS BASED ON THE CREATION OF AN EDUCATED AFFLUENT AND UNITED SOCIETY.

ON THE TEXTBOOK LOAN AID BEGINNING THIS YEAR, HE FELT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE BOOKS COULD BE USED FOR THREE YEARS IN SUCCESSION.

THIS WOULD HELP CUT DOWN EXPENSES TOTALLING MORE THAN \$62 MILLION FOR THE SCHEME.

THE MINISTER REMINDED PARENTS TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND HELP THE TEACHERS IN ANY WAY THEY COULD. HIS TWO-DAY VISIT HERE ENDS TODAY. -- BERNAMA 1424/ZCM