

KUALA LUMPUR, MAR. 29 (BERNAMA) -- EDUCATION MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMED SAID TODAY THAT A GENERAL STUDY ON PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE GOVERNMENT.

HE ADDED THAT HIS MINISTRY GAVE GREAT ATTENTION TO PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND AN +EXPERIMENTAL KINDERGARTEN+ WAS BEING CARRIED OUT IN PAHANG TENGGARA WITH THE VIEW OF IMPLEMENTING IT.

THE MINISTER WAS COMMENTING ON A SUGGESTION BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA'S DEAN OF EDUCATION, DR. AWANG HAD SALLEH THAT THE SCHOOL-GOING AGE FOR CHILDREN IN RURAL AND POOR URBAN AREAS BE LOWERED TO FIVE YEARS.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION NEEDED A CAREFUL STUDY AND ASSESSMENT APART FROM LARGE ALLOCATION.

HE ADDED THAT DR. AWANG HAD'S SUGGESTION WAS SIMILAR TO THE KINDERGARTENS WHICH EXISTED NOW.

HE SAID HE HAD NOT DETERMINED WHETHER THE KINDERGARTEN NOW BEING EXPERIMENTED IN PAHANG TENGGARA WOULD BE PLACED UNDER HIS MINISTRY OR THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

-- BERNAMA MORE 1535/YF

THE SECRETARY OF THE SELANGOR MALAY TEACHERS FEDERATION (PGMS), ENCIK JOHAR MOHAMED LAZIM, SAID THAT THE FEDERATION SUPPORTED THE SUGGESTION BY DR. AWANG HAD.

HE SAID PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION COULD HELP RAISE THE STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN THE RURAL AREAS.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE WEST MALAYSIA MALAY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, ENCIK MOHAMED KASSIM, SAID THAT THE ASSOCIATION HAD ALWAYS STRESSED ON PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE RURAL AREAS.

HE SAID THE ASSOCIATION HAD MADE THIS POINT CLEAR IN ITS MEMORANDA TO THE COMMITTEE REVIEWING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

HE ADDED THAT HIS ASSOCIATION HAD ALSO SUGGESTED THAT FREE EDUCATION BE GIVEN UP TO FORM FIVE LEVEL.

THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHING PROFESSION, ENCIK GURNAM SINGH, ALSO SUPPORTED THE SUGGESTION. -- BERNAMA 1538/YF