

# Ministry probes students' transport problems

**K**UALA LUMPUR, Tues. — The Education Ministry is making a careful and thorough study of the transport problems faced by students in the rural areas, Education Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamed, said yesterday.

"The project to overcome this problem is quite complex as it will be carried out on a nation-wide basis. That is why we need to study all the details first before implementing it," he added.

The Ministry is presently considering three initiatives: to provide students in the rural areas with school buses; to house them in hostels; or to build new schools in these rural areas.

"But we need time to decide which step to implement," Dr. Mahathir said.

The Ministry has also to consider the money involved and "how much it is going to cost the people who are paying the taxes" when deciding on the step to take, he added.

He said that an initial plan was being made to build hostels for the students in Pahang.

"This plan is now in its trial period and if it is successful, we will introduce it to the other states throughout the country," he added.

Dr. Mahathir said that his Ministry was giving Pahang first priority because the biggest transport problem faced by students were found there.

"Sometimes school-children of six to seven years-old have to travel by river to school. At times, their parents have to rent houses near the school area to facilitate travelling, but this can be very expensive, especially to the poor people," he said.

He added that since Pahang was under-developed compared to the other states on the West Coast, more attention was focused on the State.