

Special drugs probe team for schools

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KUALA-LUMPUR, Thurs. — A special drug investigation team has been set up by the Education Ministry to deal with drug-taking in schools, its Minister (Dr. Mahathir Mohamed) said here today.

All heads of schools have been instructed to look out for and to report immediately to the Ministry if they suspect pupils are taking drugs in their schools.

Dr. Mahathir said the team, which would be based in Kuala

Lumpur, will act in a moment's notice. It will comprise medical and other staff trained in drug detection and treatment.

"School heads being non-medical personnel can only inform us of the cases. It is up to the special investigation team to decide on the measures to take," he said.

"The Education Ministry, in conjunction with the Health and Welfare Services Ministries, will train more personnel for the team," he added.

Dr. Mahathir said it was not possible to spare too many doctors just to be on standby to investigate drug problems. He added that heads of schools have been told how to detect the symptoms among drug-taking pupils.

Immediate action

Under this new programme, on receipt of a notice from a school, the Ministry will send the team to that school at once to conduct investigations. If it is confirmed that the pupils are taking drugs, the team will decide on the appropriate action to be taken.

Last week, Welfare Services Minister, Puan Hajjah Aishah Ghani said that the Ministries of Health, Education and Welfare Services would pool their efforts to combat drug abuse, particularly among school-children.

She said it was only through education, medicine and rehabilitation that drug malpractices could be contained.

The Welfare Services Ministry has sent some officials abroad for special training in drug rehabilitation, she added.