

# Making lessons more meaningful

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**MERSING, Mon.** — The Education Ministry is experimenting with a new method of teaching in primary schools which takes into account the individual capabilities and aptitudes of each pupil, Deputy Prime Minister **Dr. Mahathir Mohamed** said here today.

With this new method, it is hoped that the progress of pupils in a class will be more standardised, and neither the very dull nor the very bright ones will be neglected, he said.

Dr. Mahathir, who is also the Education Minister, was opening the new \$167,000 building for Sawah Datuk National School.

## The project

He said the new method had been adopted in seven schools in Kuala Lumpur since last year.

"We will continue the programme till 1979. We hope that with this method, whatever is taught to schoolchildren will be more meaningful to them," he said.

The project is being undertaken by the Centre for Curriculum Development in the Education Ministry.

The Ministry, he said, was aware that in every class there were bright and dull pupils. If teaching was not conducted correctly, there was the danger that dull pupils would be neglected.

"It is because of this that we are experimenting with this new method, which will consider the pupil's own enthusiasm, interests and aptitude. Individual attention will be given," he said.

Dr. Mahathir said that although it was too early to gauge the result of the experiment, there were signs that it would be successful.

"By the end of our experiment, we hope to be equipped with the necessary information on how to overcome certain problems of pupils in primary schools," he said.

Dr. Mahathir, who is on a two-day visit to Johore, said it was very important for all the authorities concerned to cultivate the right attitude towards learning in primary schoolchildren.

"This is important because education does not stop at the primary level, but goes on to secondary level and beyond," he said.

"If primary schoolchildren can cultivate positive attitudes towards study, their future success would be almost guaranteed.

"No country can develop without the necessary knowledge and skills. These have their foundations in primary school. Because of this, sufficient attention must be given to the studies of children in primary school so that they will be ready to acquire knowledge in higher institutions of learning."

## Their roles

Dr. Mahathir urged students, teachers and parents to play their respective roles in ensuring great educational achievements in the country.

New and pretty schools, he said, were no guarantee of success. The important factors were hard work, responsibility and dedication.

The Government was doing its best to raise the standard of education in the country.

Under the Second Malaysia Plan, \$38 million went to education projects in Johore, out of which \$14.3 million was spent on building primary schools.

He hoped parents, teachers and pupils would make full use of the facilities provided by the Government.

"What is required from all of you is this: step up your efforts as a team. Make sacrifices if necessary," he said.

"Teachers must be ever aware of their main role,

which is to nurture the child as required in their code of ethics.

"Teachers must not do anything which will degrade their profession in the eyes of the public."

## A welcome

Dr. Mahathir, who was accompanied by Dr. Siti Hasmah, arrived at Sri Pantal airport here early this morning in a Caribou aircraft. They were met by a welcoming committee headed by Mentri Besar Tan Sri Haji Othman Saat and Puan Sri Rokiah.

Also present were the State Secretary, Datuk Eusuf Rahim, State Executive Councillors, State Assemblymen, heads of departments and the Mersing District Officer, Syed Omar bin Hassan.

The Deputy Prime Minister and his wife were greeted by kom-pang and lion-dance troupes, and given a scented-water welcome by Mersing Umno Wanita members.

Hundreds of schoolchildren and well-wishers lined the three-mile route from the airport to the school, where flags and bunga manggar were hoisted for Dr. Mahathir's first visit to the State since his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister.