

MINISTRY TO START A DATA PROJECT

N.S.T. 29 APR 77

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Move for better education planning

JOHORE BARU, Thurs. — The Planning and Research Division of the Education Ministry will start a project to gather data on all schools, pupils and teachers in Peninsular Malaysia, Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The project is to enable the Ministry to obtain more complete information on the various aspects and types of educational facilities and the teaching and administrative staff so that educational programmes could be drawn up in a more systematic manner.

The project is expected to be carried out in August this year.

Dr. Mahathir, who is also the Education Minister, was opening the 16th Conference of Heads of Secondary Schools in Peninsular Malaysia at the Bangunan Aziza here.

He said while the demand for expenditure on education was increasing yearly, the financial resources were limited. Therefore, the Ministry would have to be careful in implementing its programmes.

Dr. Mahathir said more systematic planning would ensure that available educational resources were utilised more properly and effectively.

It would also prevent wastage of public funds and reduce the wastage



Dr. Mahathir being welcomed by Mr. Harbhajan Singh.

in terms of drop-outs.

A similar project directed at professional staff in the Ministry and State education departments would also be carried out.

Data collection for Sabah and Sarawak was also being considered, he said.

Dr. Mahathir was confident that the project will help efforts for more effective development of the education system.

He said the Ministry appreciated efforts and suggestions on improving the system and quality of education as long as they did not conflict with the national education policy and were in keeping with the aims and objectives of the New Economic Policy.

Any suggestion would be considered according to the set priorities and the financial and manpower resources available.

Those who made suggestions must understand why the Government could not implement them so that they would not be disappointed but continue giving them.

On the conference's theme, *Changing Attitudes to Education Towards a More Disciplined Society*, Dr. Mahathir said it was very appropriate.

It was the national aspiration to create a society which was educated, united, moral, responsible and disciplined.

Only a disciplined society could maintain and

improve the progress achieved.

With discipline, progress in education could be achieved and solidarity could be strengthened.

Discipline would also ensure that a person would continue to be dedicated, responsible, moral and noble.

Dr. Mahathir said it was important for teachers, headmasters and other staff to be disciplined. There were some teachers and staff who themselves created problems.

This could not be allowed as the older gener-

ation should set a good example to the young who need guidance and advice.

In this respect, school heads had an important responsibility to enforce discipline among pupils and teachers to ensure the progress of their schools.

Dr. Mahathir said heads of schools should fully understand the concept of national development as embodied in the Third Malaysia Plan and the New Economic Policy.

It would be difficult for a person to lead or to be led if he did not understand the Government's policies.

He urged the school heads to discuss these concepts and objectives, especially in education and training.

The role of school heads was very important. Any malpractice by a school head, whether in administration, abuse of power or in character, would weaken the efforts to create a progressive, united, responsible, moral and disciplined society.

More than 600 heads of secondary schools in Peninsular Malaysia, observers from Sabah and Sarawak and senior Ministry officials are attending the three-day conference.