

01 APR 1996

Najib - education

CLOSER COOPERATION WITH AUSTRALIA, NZ IN EDUCATION

KUALA LUMPUR, April 1 (Bernama) -- Australia and New Zealand want new forms of cooperation with Malaysia in the field of education in their efforts to integrate more closely with Asia, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said such cooperation could be in the form of jointly setting up institutions of higher learning in Malaysia and exchanging credit facilities.

Australia and New Zealand were taken up by the education reformation in Malaysia and in the various Acts on education approved by Parliament, he said.

Speaking to reporters after launching the Jaringan Ilmu, the access provider to Internet for Malaysian libraries, Najib said such interest was expressed by Education officials during the recent visit to both countries by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. Najib was a member of the delegation.

He said Australia and New Zealand officials viewed education as important as it could help integrate their countries with Asia and Asean in particular, erode negative attitudes and help the two countries understand better the culture and history of Malaysia and the region.

Najib said it was Dr Mahathir's aspiration that there be two-way of students between Malaysia and the two South Pacific nations.

Najib said at present many foreign institutions of higher learning wanted to have collaborative agreements with Malaysian institutions with a view to awarding degrees locally or overseas but permitting the students to complete their education in Malaysia.

He also said his ministry was working on upgrading education institutes owned by corporate bodies such as Petronas and Telekom Malaysia to university level.

Speaking at the function, Najib proposed that government agencies and the private sector cooperate to ensure that everyone, rich or poor, had equal access to information.

Director-General of the National Library Mariam Abdul Kadir also spoke at the function. -- BERNAMA

ARA AAM