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Parliament-Winding

STUDENTS BARRED TO RAISE FUNDS, DEWAN RAKYAT TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 23 (Bernama) -- Raising funds for schools or certain activities is the responsibility of parents and not students, Deputy Education Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn told the Dewan Rakyat today.

He, however, said raising funds through the parents was only on a voluntary basis and not forced.

He said guidelines on fund-raising issued to schools stated that students were not allowed to collect donations but parents could help out.

He also said the ministry was in the final stages of negotiations with local universities to determine the requirement for computers in the universities.

The move was in line with efforts to equip local institutions of higher learning with the latest information technology facilities, he said when winding up the debate on the supplementary supply bill on behalf of the ministry at committee stage.

In debating the bill, opposition leader Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Tanjong) suggested that local universities be installed with on-line facilities which had access to the Internet.

He also urged the ministry to launch an information technology programme to ensure the 250,000 teachers were computer literate and had access to the internet.

He also proposed a special discount package to teachers to enable them to subscribe to the Internet.

Meanwhile, Finance Ministry parliamentary secretary Dr Haji Shafie Salleh told the House that the services of consultants had help the government to save RM50 million (US\$20 million) in the purchase of F/A-18D fighter jets from the United States.

The original purchase price of the eight jets was US\$663 million, he said when replying to questions on the Treasury.

Holding a model of the sophisticated jet, he said Vredenburg, the consultant company from the United States, was engaged to give professional advice and act as a source of reference to the Finance Ministry.

The company also provided technical advice to the Royal Malaysian Air Force, he said.

Meanwhile, Deputy Home Minister Ong Ka Ting said the National Registration Department had processed 13,686,119 applications for the credit card size identity cards until last month.

He said he was confident that the department could achieve its original target of processing 15 million applications by end of this year.

In winding up the debate on behalf of the ministry, he said a total of 3,165,194 applications were received from January to September as compared to 2,834,574 during the same period last year.

"We are confident that the department can process another one million applications in the next three months," he said.

Deputy Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Abu Bakar Daud, in winding up the debate on the ministry, said the Cabinet Committee on Science and Technology chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had not been dissolved.

He said it was up to the Prime Minister to make a decision on the committee.

He also said that 19 companies were operating in the Malaysia Technology Park which would be opened by Dr Mahathir on Monday.

The park had been operating since eight years ago, he said.

Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Mohamed Ali Rustam said commercial vehicle inspections were now being carried out promptly and efficiently as the service had been privatised to Puspakom, a private entity.

Nevertheless, commercial vehicles emitting excessive smoke would be booked and the proof from photographs taken would only be used as additional evidence, he said when winding up the debate on the ministry.

He also said the ministry would study the suggestion to separate passengers and vehicles using the ferry services in Pulau Pinang. --

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