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Najib-Handcuffs

CABINET COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS HANDCUFFING OF STUDENTS

PEKAN, Feb 23 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet Committee on Social Issues, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, will discuss the action by the police to handcuff students suspected of drug abuse, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said the matter would also be brought up in a meeting between the ministry and the police tomorrow, called specially following public outcry in the way these minors were treated and the publication of their pictures in the newspapers.

The ministry, while wanting to identify problem students, had also to consider the emotional and psychological aspects, he said.

"We don't want them to continue harbouring emotional problem because they became subject of ridicule by society. We want the parents to be involved in the matter and be informed on action to be taken against their children for misconduct," he told reporters at a Hari Raya gathering organised by Pekan Umno Division, here.

Najib was asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday that it was not necessary to handcuff the students. The police should have exercised discretion when handling cases involving minors.

Asked about the presence of some 44,000 students comprising children of foreign immigrants, Najib said there was no truth to the allegation that their presence attributed to the poor examination performance in schools.

He said on the whole there was improvement in the academic achievement of students each year where the number of those who obtained 4A in the Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah last year rose to 26,000 from 21,000 in 1995.

In KUALA LUMPUR, the National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) has suggested that the government appointed a consultant firm to study the role of Parents/Teachers Association (PIBG).

Its secretary general, N.Siva Subramaniam said there was a need for change considering that education had seen much progress while the problem indiscipline among students was worrying.

"The PIBG needs to change its role in keeping up with national development, not just thinking of how to raise fund for the school," he said.

Meanwhile, Pemadam vice-president Datuk Lee Lam Thye suggested that schools set up Pemadam Club to encourage students' involvement in anti-drug activities.

He said everyone should be involved in anti-drug efforts, not just the Education Ministry but also the PIBG, youth organisations and the police.

Lee, who is also an exco member of the Crime Prevention Foundation, also suggested that parenting skill subject be introduced in secondary schools and institutions of higher learning.

"It has been found that poor parenting skill was the main cause for the increase in cases of moral decadence among youths," he said.

Lee said Pemadam welcomed schools and institutions wishing to set up Pemadam clubs. -- BERNAMA

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