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Ling: Project concept can be used to tackle social ills

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The MCA Langkawi Project aimed at improving the educational standard of poor rural pupils can be extended to tackle the country's social ills, party president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

"This project which started three years ago called for greater participation between parents and their children for educational excellence in rural areas," he added.

Dr Ling reiterated that the project also called for the building of a family institution which could lay a strong foundation of a healthy and stable community.

"This is vital in facing the fast pace of development that is taking place in the country.

"Parents do have an important role to play in ensuring their children have proper and good education, reverence for their elders, discipline and possesses high moral as demanded by our various cultures," he told more than 1,200 primary "adopted" schoolchildren from the various races from all over the country under the Langkawi Project held at the Mines Wonderland.

Also present were Dr Ling's wife, Datin Ena Ling, deputy president and project chairman Datuk Lim Ah Lek and his wife, MCA Ministers and Deputy Ministers, parliamentary secretaries, States Executive Councillors and chief executive officer of Mines Wonderland Datuk Lee Kim Yew.

The schoolchildren were also given specially designed Langkawi Project schoolbags, ang pow and duit raya.

Dr Ling, who is also the Transport Minister, said the party also planned to expand the project by introducing computer education to the schoolchildren.

This is in line with the information age, he added, as envisaged by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the setting up of the country's Multimedia Super Corridor.

To make computers available to rural schools, he called on those in the process of replacing their old computers for new ones to donate them to the party.

"We will undertake to repair and then distribute them to the rural schools, where the children can learn to use computers," he said, adding that computer companies could also come forward to donate such items.

On community service rendered by universities and Tunku Abdul Rahman undergraduates in the project, Dr Ling said the party planned to make this even a bigger event.

"We have discovered that these undergraduates who stayed with their foster families in the rural areas have a tremendous impact on the people there," he added.

On the "adoption scheme", he called for more party members to come forward and sponsor rural schoolchildren.

"It only costs RM20 a month to help a poor but bright rural child to achieve something in life," he said.

Meanwhile, Lim, who is also the Human Resources Minister, said this was the biggest gathering of "adopted" schoolchildren since the project was launched.

"It is an opportunity for them to come together and visit the federal capital," he said, adding that many of them had not even travelled out of

their villages.

He also thanked the management of Mines Wonderland and other sponsors for hosting the event for the schoolchildren.

The "adoptive parents" comprised MCA leaders and members.

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