

28 MAR 1998

Students

GOVT NOT RECALLING HOME STUDENTS ABROAD, SAYS NAJIB

GUAR CEMPEDAK, March 28 (Bernama) -- All government-sponsored students abroad will not be recalled home despite the country's current economic problems, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

This was decided after Najib held talks with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In making the decision the government also considered appeals from various parties, Najib said when opening the Yan Umno division delegates' meeting here.

They would not be recalled as otherwise it would have a psychological effect and affect their motivation and performance, he said elaborating on his statement.

Najib said his ministry had obtained an additional allocation of between RM500 to RM600 million to support the government scholars overseas.

Najib said the decision to keep them overseas was also taken after the government had decided that it would no longer send its scholars overseas in which case it stood to save an allocation of RM152 million.

On the 1,000 odd students doing their A-Level programme overseas, he said they could continue their studies overseas provided they had places in renowned universities.

"Their progress will be assessed during the A-Level programme and if they do not do well they will have to return home," he said.

Najib said those wishing to do post-graduate studies such as the Masters and Phd D programmes, should consider studying in Malaysia.

"We will consider sending them overseas if they get places at renowned universities," Najib said.

At present there were 12,794 government scholars overseas. They had been sponsored by the Education Ministry, the Public Services Department, Mara, Petronas, Tenaga Nasional Berhad and Telekom Malaysia.

Najib said most of them were in the final years of their study and by the year 2001, it was expected that only 400 would still be overseas.

Institutions of higher learning in Malaysia were on par with those overseas, he added. -- BERNAMA

MAN AAM