

13 AUG 1999

Najib-Headdress

EDUCATION MINISTRY TO STUDY COURT'S DECISION ON HEADDRESS ISSUE

BANDAR BARU SERTING, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- The Education Ministry will study the recent decision of the Seremban High Court to declare the expulsion of three students of Sekolah Kebangsaan Felda Serting for wearing headdresses two years ago as null and void, its minister, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, said today.

He said that the ministry needs to study the court's decision before deciding whether or not to file an appeal.

"We respect the decision of the court but at the same time we also have a right to file an appeal to the court.

"Besides that, we will think of the question of regulations and other things but we will have to take into account the court's decision first," he told reporters after the inauguration of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bestari Bandar Baru Serting by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, here.

He was commenting on the decision by the court on Aug 6 that the principal of the school has no right to prohibit the three students, Meor Atiqulrahman al-Safiq Ishak, 13, Syed Abdullah Khaliq Aslamy Syed Ahmad Johari, 11, and Syed Ahmad Syakur Dihya Syed Ahmad Johari, 10, from wearing headdresses.

Najib said that the ministry had not yet made any decision on the matter.

"We will only make a decision after we have studied in detail the decision by the judge," he said.

Asked to comment on the implication of the wearing of headdresses, he said that the ministry was aware of the matter and would conduct a further study.

He declined to elaborate.

The education minister also said that the ministry was making plans to upgrade non-government religious schools throughout the country.

Najib said that he had written to all Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers to seek their views in terms of the ministry's intention to take over the state religious secondary schools and non-government secondary schools or to provide financial assistance for the schools.

"I am now waiting for feedback from all the state governments," he said.

-- BERNAMA

RP RM