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`Teacher will be hauled up soon'

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The mathematics teacher currently under fire for setting questions with political undertones will be hauled up before the Education Ministry's disciplinary board soon, its Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

"He will be asked to show cause for his action. Only after he is given a proper hearing, will we decide on the action against him.

"We cannot simply dismiss him as the board is not a kangaroo court. If we engage in summary dismissal, he may have cause later to turn back and sue us ... it has happened before," Najib said at the Ministry after addressing 20 undergraduates leaving for Japan on a study tour. The students, from public universities, will leave tomorrow and return on Nov 4.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had highlighted the questions set for Form Five students at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Jabi in Alor Star. The teacher had also set similar questions for Form Four students.

The questions, which had drawn widespread criticism, had used the names of politicians and figures linked to the Government. The teacher had claimed that he did it as a joke.

Najib said he had heard other cases where teachers indulged in anti-Government behaviour in school.

"They try to influence students ... some ask students who support the Government to put up their hands.

"The problem is that not many people come forward with official reports. We can only act if there is evidence."

Najib urged students and others with information on such cases to lodge reports with the Ministry.

On Pas being forced to concede its lifetime ambition of forming an Islamic state in Barisan Alternatif's common manifesto unveiled yesterday, Najib, who is also Umno vice-president, said Pas was opportunist.

"The purported manifesto is also not a manifesto but lies."

Najib said Pas was willing to forsake its ideals just so it could garner non-Muslim votes during the coming general election.

"They are only trying to pull the wool over the public's eyes.

"When they have ceramah, they say that they will form an Islamic state if they are on their own," he said, adding that this proved Pas was dishonest.

On the manifesto's proposals on the economy, Najib said: "They can promise anything, but the question is, will they fulfill the promises?"

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