

26 JUN 2000  
Teachers-Bullet  
STUDENT SENDS BULLET TO TEACHER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26 (Bernama) -- The National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) today revealed an incident where a teacher received a bullet believed to have been sent by a student at a primary school in Sungai Besi, here last week.

NUTP secretary-general N. Siva Subramaniam said the incident could be the most serious example of disciplinary problems which were now described as "very critical" faced by some schools.

"We received reports that the level of discipline in some schools now was very poor...in fact there were cases of teachers being slapped by students but they were not reported to the department," he told reporters at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, here.

Siva, who is also president of the Congress of Unions of Employees in Public and Civil Services (Cuepacs), was at the airport to welcome home Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad after attending the 10th Summit Meeting of the Group of 15 Developing Nations (G15) in Cairo.

However, he declined to elaborate on the incident involving the bullet, and instead urged reporters to get further details from the police.

Cheras OCPD ACP Ali Hanafiah, when contacted, confirmed the incident.

He said a bullet which was put in an envelope was found on the desk in a classroom at Sekolah Rendah Tasik Desa, Sungai Besi last week.

"Police are still investigating to find out who had sent the bullet and had yet to ascertain whether it was sent by a student or an outsider," said Ali, who could not confirm whether it was a live bullet or a spent shell.

Police were also unable to determine whether the bullet was sent to a particular teacher as a warning or there were other motives, he said.

Siva said NUTP felt that it was time for the schools facing serious disciplinary problems to seek direct assistance from the police.

It is highly likely that the NUTP may suggest to the government to use the services of the police and Federal Reserve Unit in several situations involving very severe disciplinary problems in schools.

The rationale for the suggestion was that pro-active action must be taken to ensure safety and peace for the majority of students who must be protected from disturbances by four or five students who were causing trouble, he said.

According to Siva, there might be 50 students in one classroom and possibly only two or three trouble-makers, thus action must be taken immediately to protect the other 47 students.

"Why should we wait for the student to stab first before we take action...we want more positive and pro-active action," he stressed.

Siva regretted that there were schools which portrayed only the good things in school during visits by dignitaries who would before hand inform the school about the visit.

On cases of arsons in schools, Siva said it could be true that there were cases of sabotage as had been mentioned by Deputy Education Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin.

"Possibly, it's also a sign that students want to show the Education Ministry that they dare to do them..." he said.

He urged the ministry to have serious discussions with the schools and gave appropriate consideration to factors on the shortage of teachers, which according to him, was also a contributory factor to the disciplinary problems.

The case on the stabbing of the standard one pupil was an example of how important it was for stern measures to be taken such as the body search to ensure the safety of the majority of the students, he added.

-- BERNAMA

MNY MRA/ZS AO