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Students-Egypt

STUDENTS DEPARTMENT INTENSIFIES BRIEFINGS FOR MALAYSIAN STUDENTS

By: Ahmad Zukiman Zain

CAIRO, June 25 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Students Department here plans to get experts in various fields including economy and history to brief Malaysians who form the largest group of foreign students studying in Egypt.

Its Director, Wan Bakar Wan Dagang said the move aimed to open up the mind of Malaysian students on current developments particularly issues pertaining to Malaysia.

A total of 5,676 Malaysian students are studying in Egypt especially in religious studies and Arabic language at Al-Azhar University, the world's oldest university. Sixteen of them are pursuing medicine at the University of Cairo, University of Ainsyam and also the University of Al-Azhar.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had met with a group of the students here on Wednesday after attending the Summit Meeting of the Group of 15 Developing Nations (G15). Not everyone of them could attend the gathering because of examinations.

"I could see the prime minister's sincerity in explaining whatever issue raised by the students," Wan Bakar told Bernama here.

During the three-hour meeting, Dr Mahathir also said that he would present whatever problems faced by the students to the Cabinet, particularly the Education Ministry.

Among others, they hoped that application for loans from the Higher Education Fund would be extended to Malaysian students abroad, especially those in Egypt as most of them were self-sponsored students.

"Although the registration fees are low, the students require between 200 and 300 Egyptian pounds for monthly subsistence," said Wan Bakar. (US1 = 3.46 Egyptian pounds).

He said a most of the students rented privates houses and faced major problems as there were no written agreement.

"There are many instances where landlords raise the rent without notice forcing the students to leave and look for alternative accommodation," he said.

All states except for the Federal Territory have accommodations for their respective students but these were still inadequate to meet the students' needs.

Wan Bakar said the problem would be conveyed to Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamed who is scheduled to visit Egypt next month.

The department itself is facing the problem of staff shortage to move around the country to meet Malaysian students studying in branches of Al-Azhar University outside Cairo.

Currently, there are two officers including Wan Bakar who are responsible for almost 6,000 Malaysian students in Egypt.

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