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Despicable, says DPM (HL)

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MALACCA, Mon. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today hit out at parents who involved their children in what he described as "despicable acts".

He said parents should serve as role models to their children and steer them to the right path so that they would become useful members of society.

Abdullah was commenting on reports that four Standard Two pupils of a school in Taiping had been caught performing oral sex on each other. One of the pupils later admitted to watching pornographic movies with his parents.

Abdullah said he could not understand why parents could view such materials in the presence of their children.

"Even if they adopt a liberal view, this is something extreme which they should not have done.

"I was disgusted when I read about the incident."

Abdullah said this when asked to comment on a statement by National Union of the Teaching Profession president Tengku Habsah Tengku Petera yesterday on the incident which occurred last week.

Tengku Habsah said that the four pupils were caught performing oral sex in their classroom.

Two pupils had initially engaged in the act while two others watched, but later performed the act themselves.

Abdullah said this to reporters after opening the RM1.31 million four-storey block at Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (C) Bukit Beruang today.

He later presented land lease titles to 95 residents of Kampung Baru Bukit Beruang and Kampung Baru Ayer Keroh.

Abdullah said it was important that parents bring up their children properly and instil in them good and noble values so that they could become useful adults.

Teachers, on the other hand, should equip them with proper knowledge and education to enable them to excel in life.

"Some parents may regard this as a family matter confined only to their households. But they forget that as members of society, their children will interact with and influence others."

In Taiping, police said they had met and advised the parents and pupils involved.

Larut Matang and Selama district police chief Assistant Commissioner Ahmad Katran Askandar said that the primary school administrators in Pokok Assam here had informed them of the incident.

He said no report was lodged. Ahmad Katran said police only treated the case as a social and moral problem and had asked the pupils involved not to repeat the indecent act.

On the possibility of forming a Royal Commission to look into the rise in social problems, Abdullah said a committee called "Towards Handling a Rise in Social Problems" had been set up to handle the matter.

The committee is chaired by Abdullah with the National Unity and Social Development Ministry acting as its secretariat.

"The committee will provide reports to the Cabinet before a special meeting is held to discuss the matter," he said.

Abdullah said the Cabinet meeting which he chaired last week had endorsed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's appointment to

chair the special Cabinet meeting to discuss the rise in social problems.

On the possibility of a DAP-Pas separation from their coalition, Abdullah said it was just a show put up by both opposition parties.

Abdullah, who is also Barisan Nasional deputy president, said such a show was nothing new to both parties.

"I think it is just a drama created by both the DAP and Pas."