

18 DEC 2001

NUTP-Segregation

10 PER CENT OF SCHOOLS PRACTISE SEGREGATION, SAYS NUTP

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 18 (Bernama) -- About 10 per cent of the 10,000 primary and secondary schools in the country are practising some form of racial segregation, National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam said today.

He said the situation was "quite bad with people with different agendas" doing this at a time when the government was striving to foster racial integration.

According to him, a school in Ampang here was one of those which streamed students according to their racial backgrounds.

"The government must take firm action. For this reason, there are some Chinese parents who chose to transfer their children from national schools to Chinese vernacular schools," he said.

He claimed that this practice of racial segregation in schools had been going on for the last 15 years.

"The reported case of a school in Port Klang is only the tip of the iceberg as this is the first case that has been brought to the attention of the higher level," he said.

Siva, who is also Cuepacs president, said if this trend continued the country faced a bleak future as students, who are future leaders, would not understand the concept of national integration and its importance.

He was commenting on a statement by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday that he would ask Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad to explain how race-based streaming of students could have happened.

On Saturday, the MIC Youth Education Bureau alleged that certain schools are practising discriminatory policies by streaming students based on race.

It named Sekolah Kebangsaan Pelabuhan Klang as one such culprit.

NUTP urged the government to investigate school administrators who practised such destructive policies to determine if their action was politically motivated.

"The government, especially the Education Ministry, should clean up the school administration of such narrow-minded tendencies and ensure that our schools reflect the country's multi-ethnic composition," he said.

Failure to do so now would result in dire consequences for the country and its peace-loving people, he said.

Siva said Cuepacs, the umbrella body of civil service unions, would seek a meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to discuss the matter as soon as possible.

-- BERNAMA

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