

05/09/2001

Good conduct draft samples for the Cabinet

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PUTRAJAYA, Tues. - Several samples of the agreement of good conduct to be signed by civil servants, including teachers and lecturers, will be presented to the Cabinet next week.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Rais Yatim said the drafts included the requirement for efficiency, dedication and obedience to the relevant laws and rules.

"The Education Ministry is studying the drafts and we will present a joint paper to the Cabinet next week," he said.

Rais was speaking to reporters after a meeting with Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad over the matter.

Musa was looking into the aspects relating to undergraduates, teachers and lecturers, while Rais would co-ordinate the effort pertaining to the civil servants.

Rais said he would be meeting Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman soon to discuss the matter.

Rais did not give a time frame for the implementation of the scheme.

Early last month, the Cabinet decided that civil servants and students would be asked to sign agreements pledging to uphold discipline and perform their duties responsibly.

The decision was made following Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad' suggestion that students be bound by such agreements so that public funds would not be wasted on those who refused to study.

This suggestion was later expanded to cover teachers and lecturers, and subsequently all civil servants.

The Government has, many times, expressed concern over partisan politics creeping into the public service and universities. In recent weeks, underground movements have surfaced in universities.

Rais said the agreements would be compulsory and legally binding, and any breach would be punishable under existing disciplinary procedures.

Student discipline is covered by the University and University Colleges Act 1971, while civil servants are governed by the General Orders.

"What is needed is for the disciplinary procedures to be more efficient and effective," he said.

Musa, who was also present, said the agreement was intended to state clearly the responsibilities of the civil servants and students. These were already in the laws but only in general terms.

Speaking later after signing a memorandum of understanding on educational co-operation between Malaysia and Ireland, he said Dr Mahathir would meet the teachers' unions soon to explain the matter.

"I will also meet with them after that," Musa said.

The 11 teachers' groups had, two weeks ago, rejected the agreement which they deemed as humiliating.