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OPP3-Education

MASTER'S DEGREE HOLDERS TO TEACH AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

KUALA LUMPUR, April 3 (Bernama) -- In the coming decade primary schoolers will not only be taught by more graduate teachers but some of the teachers may have master's degrees and are qualified child psychologists.

According to the Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) tabled in the Dewan Rakyat today, this was in line with the shift towards the knowledge-based economy and towards ensuring that highly competent teachers handle primary schooling to provide the foundation for a pupil's learning ability and absorption of knowledge.

This was among measures the government would take to produce quality labour force which is knowledge-rich and has superior thinking skills in line with the globalisation and the rapid technological advances, according to the OPP3 Report.

The other measures include reviewing the school curriculum to inculcate thinking skills and generate creativity and independent learning among students, especially at the primary and secondary levels.

"A strong basic education is the foundation for building a healthy , skilled and agile labour force and for competing successfully in the world market," said the report.

The report, tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said schools would be provided with facilities to allow them to teach more subjects using interactive multimedia technology and web-based teaching.

Wireless mobile computing technology will be introduced in schools in the remote and inaccessible areas so that they can still enjoy the benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Apart from connecting the majority of schools, including in rural and remote areas through the intranet and internet by the year 2010, a mechanism would also be set up to link schools with industries to ensure that the school curriculum will remain relevant to the industry.

"Industries will be encouraged to accept upper secondary school and college students to participate in attachment training and internship during school and college holidays," it said.

The other plans include turning the universities into centres for the creation of intellectual capital and new knowledge, in addition to its role of producing the future workforce.

"This will hinge on their ability to produce a pool of high calibre researchers who are actively engaged in R&D as well as undertake research activities that have commercial viability.

"In this regard, a few of the existing public universities will be restructured to become research universities focusing on post-graduate degree programmes," it added.

Private institutions will also be encouraged to increase their involvement in providing education at all levels and given incentives to those which offer courses in technical and medical.

They include greater flexibility in hiring foreign teaching personnel and less stringent immigration conditions.

In promoting life-long learning, the government would provide affordable accessibility to training courses and programmes through the Internet and other ICT-related media, the report added.

-- BERNAMA

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