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Aziz-Teachers

MINISTRY TO PROCEED WITH PROPOSED MANDATORY AGREEMENT FOR TEACHERS

By: Mohamed Haikal Isa

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Despite allround criticisms and protests the Education Ministry plans to go ahead with its proposal to compel teachers to sign employment contracts, the deputy minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin said.

Teachers in disagreement and reluctant to sign such contract can leave the teaching profession, he said.

"We shall go ahead with the proposal. Complying with the requirement will also be a boon to national security," Abdul Aziz told Bernama when contacted here today.

A binding contractual agreement would make teachers serve the government of the day with loyalty and responsibility, he said.

"Teachers who disagree may as well quit," he said adding that most of the 284,000 teachers currently in government service nation-wide are loyal to the government of the day.

News reports quoted Abdul Aziz as saying yesterday that the ruling would be enforced in tandem with a similar requirement for undergraduates and university lecturers to sign agreements with the government.

This would however depend on favourable outcome of discussions with the Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, according to Abdul Aziz.

Abdul Aziz's statement irked the National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) which declared that the proposed contract as unnecessary since teachers are already bound by several contractual agreements while still at training colleges and then with the Teaching Service Commission,

Eminent educationist Tan Sri Ainuddin Wahid reportedly said that the ministry's proposal, if meant to check wayward teachers, was not a wise one since only a handful of teachers violated the teaching code of ethics.

Despite such protests, Abdul Aziz adamantly argued that the proposed agreement for teachers would be in national and society's interest.

"Maybe it's (the suggestion) a bit rough, but the people stand to gain from its implementation. It is also not meant to suppress anyone," he said maintaining that proposal was in line with the wishes of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We should not let criticisms deter us," said Abdul Aziz.

He argued that without entering into such agreement the ministry would be helpless in dealing with irresponsible teachers who could continue being so unabated.

"At the moment these irresponsible teachers can do what they like," he said, adding that teachers disrespectful of laws were unfit to be teachers.

The prime minister recently announced moves by the government to bind undergraduates and university lecturers in clearer agreements to ensure genuine pursuit and imparting of knowledge.

There were recent instances of teachers and lecturers taking advantage of the position and profession to pursue political motives to sow anti-government sentiments through their classes.

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