

04/09/2001

Musa directs V-Cs to keep watch on student activities

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad has directed all university vice-chancellors to be vigilant in monitoring the movements of their students following reports of undergraduate involvement in an underground militant movement.

He said he had asked the vice-chancellors to take immediate action if the allegations were found to be true.

"They will be working with the police. At present, the police are helping to monitor the situation," Musa told reporters after launching an 'open day' organised by the ministry's private education department today.

He was responding to a confession by a former Universiti Teknologi Malaysia student to *Mingguan Malaysia* about her involvement in an underground movement to topple the Government.

Sources had also said that 2,500 undergraduates were involved in an underground militant movement.

Asked if the issue had been blown up out of proportion and whether the confession by Wan Noor Hayati Wan Alias, 22, and the other sources were credible, Musa said: "It is not certain who these sources are.

"We will monitor the situation and find out who the sources are and how the numbers about those involved came about. It is not clear in the newspapers."

Meanwhile, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Rais Yatim said laws on student activities should be strictly enforced to prevent more underground movements from inciting undergraduates to become militants.

He said some of the authorities now seemed to be unaware that they had the power to stamp out these movements or do not want to use their power.

"From now on, the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 must be enforced seriously," he told reporters after opening an International Law Conference at Universiti Malaya.

The Act prohibits undergraduates from taking part in political activities, among other things.

Rais said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had directed the relevant ministries and the Attorney-General's Chambers to ensure the law was enforced.

"Students who are involved in such movements will face action," he said.

Rais added that he would meet Musa tomorrow to discuss the legal guidelines on the proposed requirement that students sign a good behaviour bond.

He said they would also discuss the legal aspects of monitoring teaching staff in universities to ensure they remain focused on their duties.

Also present was Universiti Malaya vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Anuar Zaini Md Zain.

Anuar told reporters that the university was closely monitoring its students' activities.

"At the moment, there is nothing."

However, he added that they would continue to be vigilant and take action against students who took part in such activities.

"I have mentioned this many times to our students. Their duty is to study and get knowledge, be productive citizens. There is nothing else for them to do in campus."

(END)

