

26/11/2001

`Assess damage to SPM papers'

P. Sharmini; Sim Bak Heng

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) is calling for an independent body to be set up to look into the condition of the 5,000 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia Modern Mathematics II papers which were lost and recovered on Saturday.

Secretary-general Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam said today a private inquiry into the matter was necessary to quell public fears and doubts over the matter.

Siva Subramaniam suggested that the body be headed by former education director-general Tan Sri Wan Mohd Zahid Wan Noordin, and its members made up of educationists.

He also said it was doubtful that the papers were not damaged after being missing for 25 hours.

"Parents are going to question whether the papers were still intact, especially after looking at the pictures in the newspapers."

He also expects the results of the examinations to be a controversial subject once they are released on Jan 28.

Siva Subramaniam said forming the body should be the first step taken by the Education Ministry to restore credibility to the Examination Syndicate.

"There have been far too many complaints... beginning with errors in questions right up to the handling of the examination papers."

He said the Ministry should not take things for granted and "sweep it under the carpet".

If the papers are deemed damaged or missing, then the alternative is either to resit the paper or to look at trial exam results.

The NUTP will also forward a letter to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urging the Government to revamp the Ministry and privatise the Examination Syndicate to ensure the problem does not recur.

The papers for candidates from Sabah and Kedah packed in 31 boxes went missing when the vehicle transporting them to Kuantan for marking were stolen.

They were dumped in Setiu, Terengganu, while the vehicle was found abandoned in Jerteh, Besut.

In Johor Baru, Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation vice-chairman Datuk Lee Lam Thye said the authorities should improve security in the handling of examination question papers or answer scripts.

He said the Education Ministry, the police and other relevant parties should work closely together to identify weaknesses and formulate measures to improve the handling of such important documents.

"Perhaps, the police should from now on escort vehicles carrying the documents to ensure they reach the proper destinations and not fall into the hands of wrongdoers."

Lee was speaking after a forum on social and moral development organised by the Lions Club Region 7 here today.

He was commenting on the leakage of questions on the Certificate in Legal Practice (CLP) examination papers and the theft of 5,000 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia Modern Mathematics II answer scripts recently.

Though these were two separate cases, Lee said the message was that there was an element of negligence in the handling system of important documents in the country.

He said also it would be an act of injustice if the Legal Profession

Qualifying Board nullifies this year's CLP exams results due to leakage.
It was unfair to penalise every student by nullifying their results
because the papers had been leaked to only a few students.