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Parliament-Youth

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NOT IGNORED BY GOVT LEADERS, SAYS ONG

KUALA LUMPUR, April 18 (Bernama) -- Government leaders have never ignored the importance of religious education for the moulding of good moral values in a person, especially youths, the Dewan Rakyat was told today.

Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports Datuk Ong Tee Keat, however, said the government need to take into account the multi-racial and multi-religious nature of the Malaysian society when organising religious programmes even it was aimed at uniting the youths.

He said efforts to initiate programmes to curb social ills among youths were not merely the responsibility of the government and the ministry.

"We can only make an effort but GOD decides everything," he said when replying to Datuk Dr Hassan Mohamad Ali (PAS-Parit Buntar).

Dr Hassan had alleged that the approach taken by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad ignored the importance of religious education in educational institutions in the country.

He claimed that the approach had contributed to the increasing social ills among youths in the country.

Earlier, in his reply to Datuk Dr Yusof Yacob (BN-Sipitang), Ong said apart from monitoring the social problems among the younger generation, the ministry also gathered feedback and inputs from youth bodies on suitable programmes to be introduced and ways to improvise on existing programmes.

The ministry would also conduct studies to identify the reasons as to why the youths like to wild away their time aimlessly, leading them to unhealthy activities, he said.

Meanwhile, Health Ministry Parliamentary Secretary S. Sothinathan told the House that 358 projects to provide rural health facilities, which could not be implemented under the Seventh Malaysia Plan, would be carried forward to the Eighth Malaysia Plan.

The projects would be carried out along with 523 new projects proposed under the Eighth Plan from 2001 to 2005, he told Datuk Raja Ahmad Zainuddin Raja Omar (BN-Larut) who wanted to know steps taken by the ministry to upgrade rural health facilities.

To further improve rural health services, the ministry proposed to build new rural health clinics, improve facilities in midwives' clinics and dentistry services, he said.

There were 1,992 rural clinics, 725 health clinics and 194 mobile clinics providing basic healthcare services to people in rural areas, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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