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Unions want to meet PM to discuss ways of improving the teaching profession

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Teacher unions have resolved to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad over attempts to improve the teaching profession.

National Union of Teaching Profession secretary-general Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam said the formation of a code of ethics or other moves aimed at improving the profession should also involve teachers, not just politicians.

The NUTP and several other unions, together representing 65 per cent of the 280,000 teachers in public service, are objecting to the proposal that members sign a good conduct agreement, saying it might backfire.

Kesatuan Kebangsaan Guru-Guru Agama Malaysia Barat president Zainuddin Karima said existing regulations governing public servants were adequate, and called for better enforcement of the General Orders instead.

National Union of Tamil School Teachers president Shahul Hamid Mydin Shah said the whole teaching force should not be punished because of a few errant teachers, neither should teachers be labelled anti-establishment for having differing opinions.

Sarawak Teachers' Union president William Ghani Bina said the proposed agreement might affect the country's aspirations of becoming a regional centre of education excellence if it had the effect of turning the teaching profession into a career of last resort.

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