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Ethics, moral values in teacher training

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The national teacher training curriculum would be reviewed to stress more on the importance of ethics and moral values, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said that apart from giving greater emphasis on the utilisation of information communications technology and creative teaching methods, the new teacher training module would inculcate a caring culture among teachers.

"Although efforts are directed towards capacity building and development of a knowledge-based economy, the Government also acknowledges that knowledge by itself is insufficient to bring about the development of a progressive nation.

"Efforts are therefore invested in the development of a caring society by inculcating and reinforcing positive values through the education and training system," Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister said this in his speech at the Conference on Human Rights and Education at the Putra World Trade Centre here (See Page 4).

His speech was read by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim.

Among the values to be stressed in education and training are tolerance, kindness, responsibility, respect for one another, integrity, justice, diligence, co-operation, love and loyalty towards family and nation and good work ethics.

Apart from a fresh training module, Dr Mahathir said the Government was also looking at introducing more attractive housing and hardship allowances to attract quality teachers in rural schools.

Stressing that the primary thrust of the education and training programmes under the Eighth Malaysia Plan was to increase accessibility, improve quality and to reduce the performance gap between rural and urban children, he said the Government would build more centralised schools in rural areas, especially in Sabah and Sarawak.

"The necessary measures will be implemented to ensure there are adequate teaching and learning materials, infrastructure and trained teachers in rural schools."

The Government, Dr Mahathir said, had also ensured that all preschool children had access to quality pre-school education.

"In 2003, all kindergartens, whether they are private, government or quasi-government, are required to use the national pre-school curriculum which has been designed to help children acquire skills to prepare them for formal education in Standard One," he said.

He said making primary education compulsory in 2003 was also a demonstration of the Government's commitment to ratify the international Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

In conclusion, the Prime Minister said the challenge thrust upon parents, teachers, society and the nation was how to educate the younger generation while developing a caring, moral and persevering personality.