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Mustapa-grants

KELANTAN UMNO SUPPORTS GOVT'S DECISION TO HALT FINANCIAL AID

KOTA BAHARU, Oct 27 (Bernama) -- Kelantan Umno Liaison Committee has described the government's decision to temporarily stop the per capita grant to "sekolah agama rakyat" (people's Islamic religious schools) as the right move to ensure they are not politically influenced.

Its chairman, Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said Umno received many complaints from various quarters about these schools, which were used by PAS to promote its campaign among teachers, parents and students.

"The schools are not teaching religion but ideology of PAS," he told reporters here today.

Last Friday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the action was taken because some schools misused the funds for political purpose.

"The Malaysian government acts fairly. All schools are given assistance. If schools are not politicised the government would surely help," said Mustapa.

He said Kelantan Umno supports the government's decision to cut the financial aid to such religious schools.

Regarding the use of English to teach Science and Maths in primary schools, Mustapa said all parties including the Chinese society should support the government's proposal.

"We don't intend to exclude any schools from this policy and we hope it would benefit the country," he said.

He hope the Chinese community would accept this proposal and support others who agreed with the government's action.

In another development, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo said he would propose to the government that only religious schools registered with state Islamic Religious Department (Jias) would get financial aid.

Under this proposal, schools who opt to operate under their own board or private religious centres would not be eligible for funding, said Dr Mohamad Khir when asked to comment on the government's recent move.

He said there are schools in the state which use the funds properly and hope the government would reconsider its decision after carefully reviewing these schools' education system and their syllabus.

--BERNAMA

RAR RIZ VP ABG