

04 DEC 2002

Schools

MELAKA TO FREEZE APPLICATIONS FOR NEW GOVT-AIDED RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

MELAKA, Dec 4 (Bernama) -- The Melaka government has frozen applications for the setting up of government-aided religious schools (SAR) in the state in line with the government's proposal to restructure the national school system, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Ali Rustam said today.

Commenting on yesterday's statement by the Prime Minister's religious adviser, Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Othman, that 126,000 students of such schools would be absorbed into the national school system in line with the proposal, Mohamed Ali said that it was a very good move.

"Besides ensuring that the students receive quality education, teachers of the SAR will also be accorded recognition by the government in terms of better salary scale," he told reporters at his office here.

Abdul Hamid said that the move to absorb students from the SAR was reached at the 88th meeting of Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya yesterday.

Mohamed Ali said that in Melaka, most of the SAR are granted aid by the state government and are under the charge of the State Islamic Religious Department (JAIM) and the move to absorb students from the SAR into the national school system would considerably reduce the burden of the government.

In JOHOR BAHRU, Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said that the state government fully supports the proposal to absorb the SAR into the national school system.

He said that if the proposal could be fully implemented, students would have an easier choice to make as to whether to pursue a religious education or otherwise.

"We believe the new system will enhance the academic education facilities in the country," he told a media conference at Bukit Timbalan.

The move to absorb the schools would enable allocation for education be made directly by the federal government compared to the present situation where primary religious schools were mostly funded by the state government.

There are 8,000 students studying in 21 religious primary schools in Johor. The state government allocates RM9 million a year to pay for the salary of teachers and infrastructural development.

He said that the federal government allocates RM800,000 per year and the amount could be increased if absorbed in the event the proposal was implemented fully.

-- BERNAMA

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