

29 OCT 2002

Najib-National

NON-MILITARY STYLE NATIONAL SERVICE, SAYS NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- The national service thought of by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is not the military type of national service, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

However, some elements of military training might be absorbed into the programme, he told reporters here when asked to comment whether the Defence Ministry had any model for such national service.

Najib said the ministry's model of a national service was to make it compulsory for every Malaysian national reaching the age of 18 and above to undergo military training.

Earlier, at a function at the Defence Ministry, Najib received a cheque from the president of Institut Teknologi Sepang, Dr Mak Chai, which is a scholarship worth RM99,000 for children of soldiers qualified to further their studies at the diploma level at the institute.

On Saturday, Dr Mahathir said that he would propose to the cabinet to implement national service to inculcate the spirit of patriotism among the people of various races in the country.

Najib said further clarification on the proposed national service could be made after the cabinet had discussed it.

Earlier in his speech, Najib said the Ministry of Defence had never neglected the educational aspect in developing the whole of the Malaysian armed forces (ATM).

He said serious efforts by the ministry began in 1980 by introducing the ATM higher education scheme and now, the ministry offered part-time studies through distance learning and the electronic education programme.

-- BERNAMA

RV AHH AO