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Mahadzir-English

PARENTS TO BE GIVEN EXPLANATION ON ENGLISH MOVE

KUALA LUMPUR, June 17 (Bernama) -- The government will explain its move to use English in the teaching of science and mathematics in schools, said Education Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Mahadzir Mohamed Khir.

He said the ministry's officials would be directed to give the explanation if it was demanded by parents.

"If parents need it, then we will do it," he said when asked to comment on the report that some parents were confused with the move to teach both subjects in English, especially in secondary schools.

They were said to be concerned as this would also involve major school examinations and could affect their children's performance.

Mahadzir said no decision had been made on the issue as it was still being studied by a committee.

"The Minister would definitely issue a statement on this matter," he said after chairing the seminar on counselling direction in Malaysia here today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in a special interview with *Mingguan Malaysia*, said the move would be implemented simultaneously nationwide in primary and secondary schools from next year and not only in standard one classes as reported earlier.

Mahadzir said parents should understand that the move was implemented to improve the mastery of English language among school students.

"This does not mean that we will neglect Bahasa Malaysia in order to master English (language). The national language is still important," he said.

On another development, Mahadzir urged local universities to manage their counselling facilities professionally to provide better services to undergraduates.

"Each university has its own counselling centre under the HEP (student affairs department) but this is not being professionally managed.

"Sometimes students came to see the counsellor but the counsellor was not there apart from difficulty in making appointments," he said.

Mahadzir also called on the university HEPs to equip administrative officers assisting the counsellors with counselling basics to preserve their integrity.

"The integrity of a counsellor would be tarnished if he breaches the trust by telling others the problems faced by the student who seeks counselling. This, they (officers) must know," he said.

Mahadzir said the ministry was trying to provide a counsellor for every 500 school students.

"At the moment each school has only one counsellor who also have teaching duties," he said.

-- BERNAMA

NM AHH ZUL