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RM120 student payment `on a case-by-case basis`

PARIT, Sat. - The Education Ministry's one-off annual payment of RM120 to poor students to buy uniforms and books will be given on a case-by-case basis.

Deputy Education Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin said the scheme would be open to urban and rural students.

"We have not set a cut-off point but all cases will be scrutinised before the money is released," he added.

He was speaking to reporters after launching the Bank Simpanan Nasional community project for Perak here today.

Schools selected under the BSN programme will be refurbished while students will receive aid.

Also present were BSN general manager and chief executive Abu Huraira Abu Yazid and BSN Perak branch manager Rahmad Ithnin.

Abdul Aziz cited cases of families in urban areas whose income totalled RM1,000 but had difficulty managing school-going children.

"The Government wants to ensure that all children get a basic education, which will contribute to the development of the country."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had stated in the 2003 Budget that the Government would set aside RM87.8 million to be paid out to 730,000 students for the purpose.

In another development, he said the decision requiring private colleges which recruited foreign students to reapply for approval was to safeguard the interest of students and their families.

"We want the colleges to restructure their organisation and inform us of the list of courses they are offering," he said in the wake of wide-spread abuse of international student passes.

The ministry's private education department deputy director-general Datuk Hassan Hashim had said that private colleges would be given six months to reapply.