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School-English
GOOD RESPONSE TO USAGE OF ENGLISH

IPOH, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Feedback received by teachers unions showed that usage of the English language to teach Science and Mathematics has been well received by students who are more enthusiastic to learn the two subjects compared to previously.

Secretary-General of the Congress of Teachers Union in the Education Service, Shahul Hamid Mydin Shah said there was tendency now for students to learn and be more attentive with regard to these two subjects compared to the others.

"Previously, we know students were not that eager to learn science and mathematics but this has been overturned. In fact, now we think the switch to English should have been done a long time ago," he said when contacted today.

Shahul Hamid said one of the reasons contributing to the positive impact was the usage of multimedia facilities like laptops, computers, CD Rom and LCDs.

Likewise, the teachers were also happy and eager to teach in English, he said.

He said at the early stage, the Congress had feared that there would be some problems over the switch but feedback received in the past month showed that both teachers and students were adapting well to the change.

When Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced that the Government had decided that the two subjects would be taught in English in phases starting with Year One, Form One and Lower Six, there had been much scepticism.

Shahul Hamid said no major complaints were received from teachers, except for some problems relating to time taken to set up computers but he was confident it could be solved over a period of time.

He said the teachers were able to cope with the situation as they had attended courses for the past few months where they were taught on how to operate laptops and other multimedia gadgets.

"Teachers are happy with the switch although they had to face some problems due to limited vocabulary. This is not a big problem as they can still use the mother tongue and Bahasa Melayu to explain whenever necessary," he said.

Shahul Hamid, who is also the president of the Tamil School Teachers Union, said the move had also been well received in the 524 Tamil schools nationwide.

He said Tamil school teachers were "excited" with the availability of modern learning equipment and multimedia facilities like laptops and LCDs which were previously confined to schools under the "Smart School" concept.

"There was a time when Tamil schools could not even imagine that they would get facilities like these. But now they are comparable to smart schools and this is a big incentive to our teachers and students," he said.

Despite that, he said some schools faced delays in getting worksheets and textbooks until last week but the problem had since been resolved by the ministry.

On complaints that there were schools which could not use multimedia facilities as there was no power supply, Shahul Hamid said the ministry should look into the matter and provide generators as soon as possible so that teaching could go on.

-- BERNAMA

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