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Senate-winding (Supply)

NO HANKY-PANKY IN DISBURSEMENT OF ASSISTANCE TO POOR STUDENTS

KUALA LUMPUR, April 28 (Bernama) -- There will be no hanky-panky in the disbursement of assistance to the poor students, the Dewan Negara was told today.

"There will be no hanky-panky. There will always be accountability. There will be auditing on all money going in and out of the fund," said Finance Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Hashim Ismail of the Poor Students Trust Fund.

Replying to points raised during the debate on the Supplementary Supply Bill (2002) 2003 here, he said the government would also monitor the academic progress of the recipients.

"Those who meet the criteria will be eligible for assistance from the fund. The government does not care whose sons they are or which party they support," he said when winding up the debate on behalf of the ministry. The bill was later passed.

Hashim Ismail said those eligible would receive the same treatment, irrespective of religious, racial or political background.

"There is no discrimination in education. Even before this, the children of the opposition also benefit from educational facilities provided by the government," he said.

Hashim said the RM200 million fund to be launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in May would provide an annual assistance of RM2,200 to students whose parents earned less than RM500 a month.

He said that for a start, assistance would be given to poor students at the pre-school and primary school level.

The assistance would cover among others their school fees, pocket money, bus fares and school uniforms, he said.

-- BERNAMA

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