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PWD engineers given one month to submit reports on school computer labs

SUNGAI PETANI, Thurs. - Public Works Department district engineers nationwide have been directed to submit reports on the state of each school computer laboratory in their areas within a month.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the reports must include the safety aspect of the labs, who the contractors were and the dates when delayed projects could be completed.

"The information will be recorded and submitted to me and the Education Ministry after the one-month deadline," he said today after heading a MIC central working committee (CWC) delegation to inspect progress at the Asian Institute of Medicine, Science and Technology site in Semeling, near here. Samy Vellu is MIC president.

He said the reports must also include information on who was responsible for monitoring the project at each school.

Samy Vellu said the PWD had also been instructed to provide suggestions on repairing any deficiencies in the labs to the Education Ministry.

The Government yesterday terminated the services of the contractor and consultant for the school computer laboratory project as both were found to be "completely" at fault for delays and shoddy workmanship.

The issue came to light when Samy Vellu disclosed that PWD engineers had found that 574 of the 600 computer laboratories built in the east coast were not safe and in danger of collapse.

The Government also decided that repair works were to be taken over by the PWD.

In Kangar, the Malaysian National Secondary School Principals Conference today welcomed the Government's decision to terminate the services of the contractor and consultant over the computer labs fiasco.

President Alimuddin Mohd Dom described the decision as right and proper as both (contractor and consultant) had failed to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to them.

"If the construction had been done properly, the affected students would not have been denied the facility," said Alimuddin.

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad had announced that the PWD would take over all laboratory management projects earlier undertaken by Bell Grand Sdn Bhd.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had also expressed regret over the failure by the Bumiputera company to complete the laboratories throughout the country.