

Parents: Don't change Act

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Children need to focus on studies

MOST parents want the Government to maintain the Universities and University Colleges Act to ensure that their children only focused on their studies, Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said.

Winding up the debate on the Budget, Mustapa said the ministry conducted a survey on the matter and found that 90% of parents interviewed did not support amendments to the Act.

"Ninety per cent of the parents interviewed in the survey said they want their children to concentrate on their studies and not be involved in activities that are not beneficial.

"They feel that the Act would be a kind of guideline for their children," he said.

Mustapa also said the Act was not a tool to suppress the mind-set of students in public institutions of higher learning but it was "a good governance" in helping them excel academically.

On another issue, Mustapa said the ministry had frozen applications for new medical schools by private institutions of higher learning.

He said at present there were 10 public institutions of higher

learning that offered medical courses.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Azalina Othman Said hit out at local footballers, saying that they were taking things for granted.

She said there was a lack of awareness that the game could bring glory to the nation.

"In other countries, national footballers work very hard to get scholarships so that they can pursue their education.

"Here they don't do anything, but they get a free education. Some even eat seven to eight times a day, and yet nothing changes.

"There is still a lack of awareness among footballers to give priority to the sport," she said when winding up the debate on the Budget.

She added: "The problem is that football is under the Football Association of Malaysia and the ministry can only provide financial assistance and expertise."

On the proposed sports complex in London, Azalina said that a Cabinet committee on sports would be meeting on Sept 28 to discuss the matter.

Deputy Information Minister Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi told the House that a proposal to set up a Malaysian News Channel (MNC) was "too costly."

"The Government has conducted a study and found that it would cost RM100mil to set up an MNC.

"Besides, we don't know if it would be a successful programme," he said in reply to Datuk Raja Ahmad Zainuddin Raja Omar (BN - Larut).

The House adjourned at 9pm and will take a six-week break for the fasting month and the upcoming festive seasons.

The meeting will resume on Nov 6.