

One teacher training centre

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Hisham: Govt to spend RM1.3bil on it

BANGKOK: The 27 teacher-training institutes in Malaysia will be consolidated into one, with the RM1.3bil Nilai Education Complex becoming the main campus and the rest branches, Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said here yesterday.

He said each branch would have its own niche area and speciality such as early education, special education and physical education besides offering general teaching courses.

"It's the right time to coordinate and consolidate the institutes which have been operating as separate entities. At least, each one will have its own identity and ethos," he said in an interview.

Hishammuddin, here on a four-day visit to Thailand, said construction of the Nilai Education Complex on a 728.22ha site would be in two phases, with the first phase costing RM600mil.

He said, as part of the ministry's move to address shortage of qualified teachers in Sabah and Sarawak, the teacher-training institutes in Tawau and Miri would be used to train trainees from the two states after which they

would serve in the states, especially in rural areas.

Hishammuddin said the ministry would also share its expertise and experience with the Thai Education Ministry on upgrading the education system, especially in Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

"For instance, we will send officers to Rajabhat Suan Dusit University, which used to be a teacher-training college. They have 30 branches with 40,000 students and an interesting aspect is the use of ICT and digital broadcasts in education TV," he said.

The minister said Thailand was having problems with under-enrolled schools, estimated at 10,000, compared to Malaysia's 1,200, adding that both could work together to exchange expertise on how to overcome the problem.

Hishammuddin said his Thai counterpart Wichit Srisaan would visit Malaysia next week to study Malaysia's Islamic religious school structure and ICT implementation in schools, with special emphasis on how they could adopt the system in schools in the restive southern Thai provinces. — Bernama