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Blueprint to be tabled next month

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FINISHING TOUCHES:

Curricula to be redesigned to meet international standards

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THE much-awaited Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025), barring some final touches, is set to be tabled before the cabinet next month.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin yesterday said improvements have been made based on feedback from various quarters, including parents, academicians and non-governmental organisations, engaged by the government in the past three months.

"The blueprint takes into account all input. It is a comprehensive and complete. It will be tabled before the cabinet next month," he said after an interactive session with more than 1,000 administrative and diplomatic (PTD) junior officers yesterday.

Muhyiddin, who is also the education minister, said the Conference of Rulers would also be

briefed on the blueprint.

Under the blueprint, the government seeks to raise the standards of the national curriculum to an international level.

The curricula for both primary and secondary schools will emphasise the application of knowledge and development of critical, creative and innovative thinking skills.

It had been announced that in its first three years, redesigning the curriculum will include benchmarking its learning and content standards against that of high-performing systems.

The alignment of these standards will complement syllabuses that ensure the breadth and depth of content covered in the curriculum will not overload students. The government will also engage international experts to validate the results of this exercise for English Language, Science, and Mathematics subjects.

The government is also looking into increasing the proportion of questions in both school-based assessments and national examinations that test higher-order thinking in the next three years. This will which will test the ability of students to apply, analyse, evaluate and create.

By 2016, questions that test these skills will make up 80 per cent of Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) questions, 80 per cent of the Form 3 central assessment,

three-quarters of the questions for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) core subjects and half of the questions for SPM elective subjects.

Pivotal is the enhanced support for teachers to ensure the written curriculum is accurately translated into classroom teaching through better teaching resources and an expanded School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+) role.

The government will also introduce Literacy and Numeracy Screening (LINUS) 2.0 with an expanded scope to address English literacy. The programme will build on the success of LINUS 1.0, which improved Bahasa Malaysia literacy from 87 per cent to 98 per cent, and numeracy from 76 per cent to 99

per cent, in its first three years.

The education ministry will also pilot the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) for secondary school students in 10 schools, starting next year. The national curriculum will also provide students with opportunities to learn arts, be involved in at least one sporting activity and other co-curricular activities.

On if the United Chinese School Committees Association of Malaysia (Dong Zong) would be satisfied with the changes in the blueprint, Muhyiddin said it could not satisfy everybody's needs.

"What's important is to fulfil the needs of the majority and not to please certain groups. We have tak-

en into account some of Dong Zong's views on vernacular schools in the blueprint."

Dong Zong had claimed that the blueprint was unfavourable to the multilingual education system, citing the focus on the teaching and learning of the national language and not their favoured "mother tongues", as the prime cause of objection.

On the opposition's attempt to undermine civil servants' contributions in developing the nation, Muhyiddin said the government's successes were the result of a diligent and committed force.

"As the opposition, they will not recognise (what had been achieved) because doing so will mean they acknowledge our success as a government.

"The successes Malaysia has secured so far is because of government policies and strong collaboration with civil servants."

"The blueprint takes into account all input. It is a comprehensive and complete."

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin
deputy prime minister