

RM500m to repair 600 schools next year
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Education Ministry will spend RM500 million next year to repair 600 dilapidated national schools, said its minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the ministry would channel most of the money to schools in Sabah and Sarawak.

He said these schools were identified from an audit carried out earlier this year to determine the infrastructure in all schools.

"The repairs are important so that the schools' performances will not be affected," he said after attending an open dialogue session with Fellows of Teach For Malaysia yesterday.

Earlier, Muhyiddin who is also the deputy prime minister, said Teach for Malaysia is the first programme to bridge the gap between high performing and disadvantaged schools.

He advised the 50 participants, comprising fresh graduates and young professionals, to take the extra effort and initiative to engage the students rather than relying on examination results to gauge their performances in schools.

"If a student is absent or is playing truant, you can either complain to the headmaster or take the initiative to find out where he went or go to his home to find out."

He also invited them to present suggestions and ideas on how to improve the education system to his ministry.

Also present at the dialogue session were Education director-general Datuk Seri Abd Ghafar Mahmud and Teach for Malaysia adviser Tan Sri Dr Jemilah Mahmood.

The teachers were picked from more than 500 applicants who had applied online and had gone through phone interviews, web-based activities and in-person assessments, including teaching mock classes.

The first batch comprised 27 fresh graduates and 23 young professionals with degrees from various fields.

They will be teaching at 17 schools here, Selangor and Negri Sembilan for two years.

Teach For Malaysia is modelled after Teach For America, which was founded 20 years ago.

Online applications for the 2013 Fellowship opened on Oct 31, with a Dec 19 deadline.

For more information, log on to www.teachformalaysia.org.

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