

**Government Will Not Close SJKCs, SJKTs - Muhyiddin  
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ALOR SETAR, April 5 (Bernama) -- The government has never called for Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKCs) or Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil (SJKTs) to be closed even if they lacked pupils, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said the SJKC and SJKT schooling system could not be denied by anyone because it was established to fulfil the education needs of the Chinese and Tamils who from a sizable portion of the population of the country.

He said there was no act of law that empowered the Education Minister to close these schools.

"Only in Malaysia do we provide education opportunities to cater to the needs of minority groups," he said at a meeting with teachers and students of

SJKCs and SJKTs at SMK Keat Hwa II near here today.

He said the government also had never marginalised SJKCs and SJKTs but in fact had always ensured that this schooling system remained at a very good level and on par with the national schooling system.

"Do not be misled by claims that these schools are not receiving enough attention. The Barisan Nasional (BN) is fair to all, it does not discriminate any group," he said.

Muhyiddin said the federal government allocated RM2.89 billion annually for the upkeep of 1,200 SJKCs while for SJKTs the amount was RM1.04 billion.

At the function, Muhyiddin also presented an allocation warrant for RM14.42 million to benefit 89 SJKCs and 58 SJKTs in Kedah besides RM500,000 for kepada SMK Keat Hwa II.

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