

DPM Guarantees SJKC, SJKT Will Stay So Long As BN Rules
Bernama
16 April, 2013

JOHOR BAHRU, April 16 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has given assurance that the national-type Chinese schools (SJKC) and national-type Tamil schools (SJKT) will continue to exist in the country so long as Barisan Nasional (BN) rules.

Muhyiddin, who is Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister, said the BN government would preserve the vernacular schools as part of the national education system.

"The BN government will preserve the SJKC and SJKT to ensure that the children of the Chinese and Indian community in the country will be able to learn their respective mother tongues and their cultures."

He said this at a special meeting with SJKC teachers at SJKC Foon Yew, which was also attended by Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and Deputy Education Minister Datuk Wee Ka Siong.

Muhyiddin also called on the Chinese community not to get influenced by the opposition's baseless allegation, especially during the polls, that the SJKC would be sidelined by the government.

The deputy prime minister said apart from focusing on the effort to improve students' command of Malay language, the government also wanted the students to have good command of English and Mandarin.

He said this was because the government acknowledged that Mandarin had become an important regional lingua franca and business language.

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin said the government had always concerned about the infrastructure and facilities, as well as the teachers' wellbeing, in SJKC.

At present, he said 30,000 SJKC teachers, whose salaries were paid by the Education Ministry, were teaching at over 1,000 SJKC across the country.

He said the ministry had also allocated RM100 million each year to SJKC and SJKT to enable them to upgrade their facilities.

Starting next year, Muhyiddin said the government would also provide a fixed allocation for the vernacular schools, which would be included in the national budget.

At the meeting, Muhyiddin also announced an allocation of RM15 million to SJKC in Johor this year.

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