

Restructure of Education Ministry within a month

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MERGER: Not many changes required and it will not cause major issues, says Muhyiddin

PUTRAJAYA: THE restructuring of the Education Ministry will be completed within a month following the merging of the former education and higher education ministries.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the merger would not require much change and would not create major issues as both ministries had in place solid programmes and measures.

"The present systems implemented by both ministries are running smoothly and the restructuring exercise will further enhance the system.

"We only need to streamline certain matters at certain levels," said Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, after chairing a meeting with Higher Education Ministry senior officers yesterday.

Muhyiddin said he had met Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ali Hamsa and Public Service Department director-general Datuk Mohamad Zabidi Zainal to deliberate on the restructuring.

"I also met the top leadership of both ministries and listened to what they had to say on the merger."

Muhyiddin said the restructuring would not take long as the main functions of both ministries could still be retained. Certain areas were being looked into.

On the overlapping of posts such as the director-general or secretary-general, he said there were several suggestions to address this.

"I am still waiting for the report and expect to get it by next week. Once I receive it, I will bring it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak for his approval.

"Initiatives started by both ministries, such as the National Higher Education Strategic Plan and Malaysia Education Blueprint can still be carried out.

"We can proceed with the execution of both plans. If there is a need to streamline them in the future, we will review them."

Muhyiddin said the aim was to turn Malaysia into an international education hub on a par with those in developed nations.

"We must be open-minded and ready to listen to suggestions, feedback and criticisms."

On the recognition of the Unified Examination Certificate (UEC) to enter local public higher learning institutions, he said the United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia (Dong Zong) had yet to revert on whether it would make the necessary changes.

"We have discussed the issue and there is no final say from them yet. In order to be accepted, Dong Zong needs to make the changes in line with the country's policies. If they are ready to make changes, then there will be no problem."

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