

Only Three Categories Of Schools From Next Year

SUNGAI PETANI, March 31 (Bernama) -- The Education Ministry will stipulate that there will only be three categories of schools from next year to avoid public confusion over the status and cause of the schools.

Its minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said the three categories would be government schools, government-assisted schools and private schools.

"By 2010, I want to see only three categories of schools because I don't want people to be confused as I'm worried that certain quarters would exploit the situation in the context of race and religion," he said after presenting an allocation of RM210,000 for facilities under the economic stimulus package to Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (SJK) Tamil Sungai Getah, here, today.

Hishammuddin said government schools were the mainstream schools and formed the majority where efforts were being made to enhance the status of these schools.

"Government-aided schools are at present seen in the context of the Tamil and Chinese SJKs (national-type schools), mission schools and religious schools with their own thinking and causes," he said.

Hishammuddin said government-aided schools would continue to be given attention and support by the government where the schools which were in a deplorable state and unsafe would be given priority.

Private schools, he added, were now seen as an economic catalyst as they were not only favoured by the foreign communities in Malaysia, but also increasingly by the locals.

"The people don't understand and tend to mix up the SJKs with the SKs (national schools), whereas the government-assisted religious schools are of the same status with the SJKs where the land belong to the schools.

"They each have a board of governors, while the SKs don't have. So, their status and history are different.

"It's difficult to place them in the same category but if we don't, certain quarters will exploit the situation. They'll say that we discriminate against certain schools despite the teachers being supplied by the ministry and

we don't interfere with their board of governors and the school land ownership."

Hishammuddin also reminded these groups not to exploit or sensationalise education issues by bringing in race and religion as this could divide the people and threaten the country's stability.

He said if all quarters did not have the will to solve the issues courageously, the future generation would have a dark future.

-- BERNAMA