Census on enrolling paperless kids into public schools

Sherill Jeffrey KOTA

The State Education and Innovation Ministry is still in the midst of conducting a census to streamline the process of enrolling undocumented children into public schools in the state.

Its Minister Datuk Dr Yusuf Yakob (pic) said they have a body to look into the matter and hope the census can be completed within a year.

"Sabah is a huge State and we will take our officers a bit of time to complete the census, we are aware that this needs to be done quickly," he said, after organising the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Heritage’s book launching ceremony at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Recital Hall, Tuesday.

The census is to find out the number of undocumented children and to ensure the process of enrolling them into public schools is in accordance to the stipulated guidelines.

The new policy came into effect on Jan 1 and aims to simplify the registration of children without citizenship in government schools.

Last October, the Federal Education Ministry decided that children without citizenship need to produce their birth certificates, adoption papers or court order to register in public schools. If they do not have these documents, they can get verification from the community leaders or their people’s representatives.

Deputy Education Minister Teng Nie Chin said children without citizenship but where one parent is a Malaysian citizen and has a birth certificate, will be allowed to register in government schools.

Parents or guardians of the children can make their application by filling up the Citizen Student Without Documents (MWTD) forms in the respective District Education Offices. The forms must be verified by the village chiefs in the areas where they reside.

They have up to two years to provide the necessary documents, Dr Yusuf said they personally thinks all human beings have the right to an education.

"Children should be left to wander around in shops and back-alley schools, they should be in school, regardless of whether they are local children or immigrants.

"It is an issue of these immigrants in the State, thus the reason we are still in the process of conducting a census on how we can solve this problem," he said.

They hope to expedite cases where one of the parents are locals. "We want to get this done quick to ensure their children can be enrolled into schools."

On another note, he said there are currently about 300 children whose parents are documented immigrants working in estates, who are now studying at Community Learning Centres in the estates.

Once they complete their studies at the Community Learning Centres they return to their respective countries to pursue their first studies at secondary school level," he said.

He said this is a policy established in that past that estates must provide schools for their worker’s children; workers who are registered as foreign labourers or one of the parents is registered as a foreign labourer.

"These children will be taught at the estate’s Community Learning Centres and will return to their country to pursue their education upon completion," he said.

Nothing wrong with IGP’s Turkey trip: Muhyi

SELANGOR: It was not wrong for Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun, and several other top police officers to have gone on the recent working trip to Turkey as it was not directly sponsored by a private company, said Home Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the visit was sponsored by the Malaysia Totalisator Board, which is under the Ministry of Finance.

"I don’t think there was any wrong in that. If it (the trip) was sponsored by the private sector, I would not have approved it, and I have approved it," he said.

Plan to merge Science and Arts streams

PETALING JAYA: Streamless schools are the way forward. Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik said this was among the suggestions received from the National Education Policy review committee.

"We are not going to put our students into Science and Arts (streams) anymore but a new curriculum we will implement, we will not only emphasise Science, but also Arts (culture) because it is part of one; it cannot be compartmentalised and should be integrated instead," he said.

The way forward, he added, is to make STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) a way of life.

Ex-Umno MPs to play prominent role in PH: Azmin

Azmin said the seven individuals would persuade Umno’s grassroots members to support Dr Mahathir’s leadership and help the government restore the country back to its glory days.

"I think I can accept the justification (for the crosses) and we have to move forward. This is a plus factor for us because they will go down and meet Umno members to clarify the need to leave Umno, which is a corrupted party," he said.

On Tuesday, seven former Umno MPs, namely Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin (Larut), Datuk Rosol Wahid ( Hulu Terengganu), Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Ahmad (Mening), Datuk Shabudin Yahaya (Tanah Gjelung), Datuk Mohamad Faisal Mohd Fakih (Sikab Bernam) Datuk Seri Iklai Hisham Abdul Aiz (Tanjah Merah) and Datuk Mas Emirayati Samidtun (Masjid As-Salam) received their Bersatu membership cards from Dr Mahathir.

"We do not want to take over our government and say ‘don’t be Umno’ because we are in the midst of doing something still, we are all undignified," he said. — Sheryl Jeffrey