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Sekolah Alam Shah Gets New Name

PUTRAJAYA, March 25 (Bernama) -- Sekolah Alam Shah here had its named changed to Sekolah Sultan Alam Shah Saturday.

Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah of Selangor had consented to the school taking the new name, of his grandfather, Sultan Sir Hishamuddin Alam Shah Alhaj, the seventh sultan of Selangor.

In his speech officiating the school, which was relocated here, Sultan Sharafuddin said: "Sekolah Alam Shah was opened by my father, the late Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Alhaj, on March 7, 1964 at its original location in Bandar Tun Razak.

"Now, Sekolah Alam Shah stands proudly in Putrajaya. We hope that the move to the country's administrative centre will enable the school to maintain its excellence as one of the best fully residential schools in Malaysia," he said.

Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, his deputy Datuk Noh Omar, Education Director-General Datuk Dr Ahamad Sipon and the school's principal Khairil Awang were present at the function.

Speaking to reporters, Education Minister Hishammuddin said an Education Ministry programme to make fully residential schools centres of excellence for eventual international recognition would see the upgrading of 23 such schools in terms of physical infrastructure and the setting up of 12 more of these institutions that can provide for higher enrolment.

He said the programme, to be implemented under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), would enable the 12 new schools to fulfil the increasing number of applications to join fully residential schools, thus providing more opportunities for students either from the rural or urban areas.

"Discussions on the construction of the 12 fully residential schools are in the final stage, and it will be left to the state governments to provide suitable locations for them," he said.

Hishammuddin said importance would be given to sports development at the 54 existing fully residential schools to ensure that sports was given appropriate emphasis, similar to excellence in the academic and co-curriculum fields.

He also said that the ministry was in the process of establishing links between selected fully residential schools, including Sekolah Sultan Alam Shah, premier schools, elite schools and schools 100 years and older with well-known schools abroad to make the local excellent schools a showcase for the international community.

Hishammuddin said that under the ninth plan, aid would be channelled to schools that were really in need compared to those that already had the basic infrastructure to ensure that all students enjoyed equal educational opportunities.

"It would be my responsibility and that of the ministry to ensure that over the next five years (of the ninth plan period) existing schools are able to compete on a level playing field," he said.

He said much of the allocation would be channelled to schools that did not have electricity and water supply and those that did not have enough teachers.