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Volunteer English teachers from Singapore won't affect local jobs, says MoE

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The Ministry of Education has assured that the entry of volunteer English teachers from Singapore will not impact the recruitment and placement of local graduates and teachers. Pic by NSTP/AIZUDDIN SAAD

KUALA LUMPUR: The Ministry of Education has assured that the entry of volunteer English teachers from Singapore will not impact the recruitment and placement of local graduates and teachers.

The ministry, in a written reply at the Dewan Negara, said the recruitment of these volunteer teachers resulted from discussions between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his counterpart Lawrence Wong in June and would be funded by the Singaporean government.

The ministry highlighted that the proposal is currently being scrutinised, especially concerning its implementation in MoE educational institutions to ensure it aligns with existing policies and regulations, while qualified volunteers are being identified to guarantee the quality of teaching and learning.

"This scheme aims to help improve the English proficiency of students in poor urban, suburban and rural areas, including Sabah and Sarawak.

"Good command of English can help increase the country's competitiveness, facilitate international trade and enable access to the latest knowledge, specifically in science and technology," it said in response to a question from Senator Datuk Seri Ti Lian Ker, who inquired about the impact of the volunteer initiative on local graduates and teachers.

Meanwhile, the MoE said that based on stakeholder engagement findings, there is no need to expand the Sekolah Bimbingan Jalinan Kasih (SBJK) programme.

It said that engagement sessions with non-governmental organisations and state and local authorities were held to gather input and views on providing educational access to homeless children who are citizens without documents or in similar situations across the country.

These engagement sessions involved 11 states, namely Penang, Johor, Pahang, Terengganu, Kedah, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan, Perak, Sarawak and Sabah, it said in response to a question from Senator Abun Sui Anyit regarding the challenges faced by the MoE in expanding the SBJK programme.