

Less exam-oriented education

SUNDAY STAR 19/04/09 ms N3

70% of marks to come from six-year assessment under new UPSR curriculum

By **KAREN CHAPMAN**
and **LEE YUK PENG**
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Thirty per cent of the Primary School Assessment Test (UPSR) will account for a child's results when a new curriculum is introduced for Year One pupils from next year.

The remaining 70% will be based on several approaches, including psychometric tests, school-based assessments and achievements in extra-curricular activities and sports throughout the six years of study.

"By the time the pupils sit for the UPSR in 2016, they would have been assessed from Year One in these other areas which will make up 70% of their marks with 30% from the (UPSR) examination itself," Deputy Education Minister Datuk

»We have to introduce this new curriculum at Year One as we can't start from the middle«

DATUK DR WEE KA SIONG



Dr Wee Ka Siong said.

He said that Year One pupils in 50 schools nationwide had been using the new curriculum under a pilot project last year. It was extended to 500 schools this year.

"The pilot project is ongoing at the moment. A final decision will be made by the end of the year to determine

the weightage of the UPSR marks," he told reporters after representing Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin at the Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair at the Putra World Trade Centre yesterday.

Dr Wee said feedback from the pilot project had been positive and the ministry would consider other

views before making the final decision on the weightage.

"We have to introduce this new curriculum at Year One as we can't start from the middle," he said. At present, 100% of pupils' assessment in Year Six comes from the UPSR.

Former education minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein had said that the new curriculum would replace the existing primary school integrated curriculum first introduced in 1983 and reviewed in 2000.

Education director-general Datuk Alimuddin Mohd Dom said the new curriculum would not test pupils only on what they have learnt in a centralised examination.

"Parents have complained that the system is too examination-oriented so we are trying to make it more holistic and fun for pupils," he said, adding that school-based assess-

ments should not be a burden for teachers as they were already assessing their pupils through weekly and monthly tests as well as mid and year-end examinations.

By doing this, Alimuddin said that if pupils fell ill during the exam and did badly, the ministry could still take into account their overall school assessment rather than depend solely on their UPSR results.

"If the pupils still get A in their UPSR, this means the marks are not derived solely from their brains but having taken into account other approaches such as attitudes, extra-curricular activities and school-based assessments," he said.

As for the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) and Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examinations, he said there were proposed weightages of 50% and 70% respectively.