

MOHE to hold discussions with Defence Ministry on bullying at UPNM

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The Higher Education Ministry (MOHE) will hold in-depth discussions with the Defence Ministry (MINDEF) to review existing policies and enhance procedures for effectively addressing bullying cases at Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM). - NSTP/ASWADI ALIAS

PUTRAJAYA: The Higher Education Ministry (MOHE) will hold in-depth discussions with the Defence Ministry (MINDEF) to review existing policies and enhance procedures for effectively addressing bullying cases at Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM).

In a statement today, MOHE said the move was made to ensure the safety of students on campus and to prevent such incidents from recurring.

It said that the bullying incident, to a certain extent, had given a bad image to higher education institutions, which were meant to serve as platforms for nurturing both intellectual and personal development.

In addition, the ministry said it would work closely with enforcement agencies should any serious violations of laws occurred.

MOHE hoped that IPT staff and students would act as the 'eyes and ears' for the authorities and report any cases of misconduct to the relevant parties.

"MOHE would like to issue a stern warning to all IPTs not to protect or engage in such bullying incidents. The ministry will not compromise, and stern action will be taken against those found guilty," it said.

According to the statement, UPNM students were divided into two categories, namely 80 per cent were civilian students, while 20 per cent were cadet officers.

The management of these two student categories is shared between UPNM under the MOHE and the Military Training Academy (ALK) under MINDEF.

"UPNM, under MOHE, is responsible for teaching and learning (PdP), lectures, and student activities from 8am to 5pm, while ALK oversees military discipline, non-academic activities, and military training starting at 5 pm onwards, including weekends and public holidays.

"MOHE works closely with MINDEF to ensure the smooth execution of all activities and programmes arranged for UPNM students in both categories," the statement read.

Regarding the bullying case that allegedly occurred at ALK, UPNM, on Oct 21, involving a first year student who was believed to be stepped on by a senior resulting in a fractured rib and spinal injuries, the MOHE said that it would leave the investigation to the police and provide full cooperation for further action.