Ased adopts plan to spur regional education progress

Adam Radhi
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN

EDUCATION Ministers convening at the Sixth Asean Education Ministers Meeting (6th Ased) yesterday adopted the proposed five-year work plan on education (WPE) that will catalyse developments of education in the region.

The WPE covers four strategic priorities: promoting Asean awareness; increasing access to quality education; education-performance standards; lifelong learning and professional development; strengthening cross-border mobility and internationalisation of education; and lastly to provide support for other Asean sectoral bodies with an interest in education.

According to the 6th Ased joint statement, the adoption of the WPE (2011-2015) marks a “significant milestone” in the developments of Asean education. The WPE will serve as an analytical framework and roadmap towards realising the educational goals of the Asean Community by 2015.

However, the specifics on the mechanisms to bring about the targets and the implications of them are yet to be identified.

To avoid overlapping with the various cooperative frameworks such as the Asean Dialogue Partners, the specific fine details of the WEP are to be determined at a later date.

“Ministers (present at the Ased meeting) instructed Senior Officials on Education to look into the WPE agenda, and ensure efficiency in the allocation of resources and in the scheduling of meetings.”

The principle to increase the availability and access to quality education is very important one in order to provide for the 600 million people of Asean, or 10 per cent of the world’s population.

In this context Education Minister, Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia Dr Hj Abu Bakar Hj Apong and President of the 46th Southeast Asian Minister of Education Organisation Council (Sensea), noted that the education ministry shows a large record for youths, the minister commented that “education is very important to develop the potential of young people, the new generation who will be the workforce of Asean”.

Adding that if developments in this field were not achieved then “we will be left behind in the development of education and thus also lead to a failure in economic organisations”.

Earlier in the morning, Pehin Dato Dr Hj Abu Bakar had also held two separate bilateral meetings with Moe Phoe, the Cambodian Minister of Education, Youth and Sport.

During the bilateral meeting with the Unicef representatives from Thailand and Malaysia, the ministry discussed the need for stronger bilateral cooperation in the area of early childhood education. The possibility of Unicef supplying expertise in conducting training for Brunei teachers in early childhood education will be explored, a press advisory read. It further stated that Unicef can provide assistance in the early childhood education sector.

During the meeting with Cambodian Minister Sethy, both parties expressed satisfaction at the current state of collaboration between the two countries through Seameo and Asean frameworks.

Sethy further congratulated the minister for his new post as president for Seameo and looked forward to his visit to Cambodia in his new capacity.

The meeting was specifically focussed on cooperation within the field of technical and vocational education, the qualification frame-