

French not suitable for our schools as yet

KUALA LUMPUR,
Thurs. — Five
French Senators
called on Education
Minister Dr. Maha-
thir Mohamed today
to discuss the pos-
sibility of popularis-
ing French in Ma-
laysian schools.

The delegation was led
by the president of the
French Commission for
Cultural Affairs, Mr. Jean
de Bagneux.

After the meeting, Dr.
Mahathir said he wel-
comed the teaching of
foreign languages in Ma-
laysian schools so long
as they are useful.

He said the teaching
of French for the mom-
ent would be confined to
institutions of higher
learning because "It is
not practical to introduce
the language to the pri-
mary and secondary
schools yet."

Interpreters

He added that the
French visitors also of-
fered the possibilities of
increasing educational
aid, such as scholarships
to Malaysians to study in
France.

There are about 30 Ma-
laysians studying in
France at present.

Dr. Mahathir said the
Government is consider-
ing setting up a school
of interpreters.

"The project was pro-
posed some time ago but
it had to be postponed
because the person who
was supposed to start the
school had to terminate
her course in France," he
said.

The Government is
considering another can-
didate to head the
school.

Dr. Mahathir said Ma-
laysia needed multi-
lingual interpreters be-
cause of the increasing
number of international
conferences and conven-
tions here.

Interpreters were also
important in the field of
tourism, he said.