

PM: We are for mother tongues

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achieved Independence unlike a neighbouring country which was encouraging only English education rather than Chinese education even though their leaders were Chinese.

"Here we encouraged Chinese and Tamil education although the official language is Bahasa Malaysia," he said. "At the least, Bahasa Malaysia is a language where all the people in the country can speak and understand."

The Prime Minister said people had to consider themselves Malaysian citizens although their ancestors might be from other countries.

The Prime Minister also announced that the government had allocated \$100,000 for the development of the school.

Earlier chairman of the school's board of directors, Mr Foo Wan Thot, said Chinese independent schools had played a large role in the field of education and manpower training.

"Despite their significant contribution to the nation, these schools receive no financial aid from the government. They survived on public donations only," said Mr Foo, who is also chairman of the Council of Perak Schools Committees.

Mr Foo urged the Government to support independent Chinese schools financially and to grant them permanent permits. He also asked that more teachers be trained and that the number of national-type Chinese schools be increased in newly-developed areas.

He also appealed to the Government to exempt from tax donations to education institutions.

Vernacular schools to stay: Mahathir

By FOONG THIM LENG

IPOH, Sat. — The Government will review the Education Act to erase fears that vernacular schools will be forced to convert to national-type schools, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Government, he said, had no intention of forcing vernacular schools to convert to national-type schools.

"Parents and those in the field of education can discard their fears on the issue," he said while open-

ing a computer exhibition and forum at the Shen Jai High School here.

He said the record showed that the Government had never forced any national-type school to convert to a national school. There had been only one such conversion and it involved a national-type Tamil school in Kelantan at the request of the pupils' parents.

Dr Mahathir said the Government had been liberal on educational matters since the country

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