

PM 'gave his word on school status'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has instructed the Education Ministry to look into the acute shortage of Chinese primary schools in the country.

The Prime Minister expressed concern over the problem which was raised by a 51-member MCA Youth delegation during a dialogue on Tuesday.

MCA Youth chairman Datuk Chan Kong Choy, who led the group, said yesterday the Prime Min-

ister had asked the ministry to conduct a comprehensive study to find ways to resolve the problem.

"Dr Mahathir also gave an assurance that the Barisan Nasional Government will continue to uphold and maintain the status of national-type Chinese primary schools," Chan told a press conference.

He said Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat had also taken note of the shortage which he said had affect-

ed the admission of Malay pupils.

"The shortage could be seen from the soaring number of students from 481,150 in 1971 to 582,643 in 1994 while the number of Chinese primary schools remain unchanged," he said.

Chan, who is Deputy Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister, added that the problem was aggravated by over-crowding and lack of such schools in new residential areas.

The problem was among several points con-

tained in a 23-page memorandum the movement submitted to the Prime Minister during the "cordial and constructive two-hour meeting," he said.

Chan also proposed the setting up of a board of councillors for Kuala Lumpur City Hall to better serve the residents and strengthen the administrative machinery.

Dr Mahathir, he said, had agreed to seriously consider the proposal aimed at making City Hall more dynamic and economic-orientated.