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`Opposition to fund's dissolution a political move'

A. Kathirasan; Leong Shen-li; Chok Suat Ling

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Opposition to the dissolution of the South Indian Labour Fund is political and aimed at attacking the MIC, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said some people just wanted to attack the MIC, especially its leadership, and were using this as an issue.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on opposition from several Indian organisations, including the Malaysian Hindu Youth Council, and the DAP to the dissolution of the fund.

Speaking after opening the MCA general assembly, Dr Mahathir said: "We must not use racial sentiments in discussing such issues. We should no longer consider ourselves South Indians. We are Malaysians."

He said the fund was established by the British to suit the times but now the Indian community was much better off and there was no need for the fund.

"The Government gives necessary attention to the Indian community. Those who are now benefiting from the fund will continue to do so. The opposition to the dissolution of the fund has nothing to do with the benefits. It is just an emotional outburst. Some local Indian papers, especially one particular Indian paper, like some Chinese papers, sometimes play up issues for political purposes."

He said the Government would listen to the problems of the Indian community.

On recent remarks by leaders of the MIC and the People's Progressive Party on alleged interference in the PPP by some MIC leaders, he said it was minor and that everyone would close ranks during the general election.

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