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A concerned voter's millennium wish for diligent MPs

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IT started when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned Barisan Nasional Members of Parliament to attend all parliamentary sessions and not play truant.

Dr Mahathir must have very good reasons for doing so.

Since then, a lot more was published by the Press and it also generated public interest.

Unfortunately, this sad state of affairs is nothing new and may continue even in this new millennium unless all MPs make a resolution to really re-examine themselves and their role.

They must take serious note of the rakyat's views and make efforts towards self-improvement.

We were shocked to learn that there are even many MPs who have not made a single speech or participated in a debate during their entire term.

Some of them only "warm the bench and are afraid to speak up for fear of looking bad and want to protect their image."

Basic things like regular attendance and quorum are always a problem while there are even some who do not attend the full sessions but sign the attendance book to claim allowances. They then disappear to attend to private or personal business. There is a word for this - cheating.

Other common parliamentary features are not observing decorum, name-calling and distasteful language.

It is a sad day in our parliamentary history when words such as "truant" are used and attendance records are published in newspapers. It reminds you of naughty schoolboys whose conduct must be monitored.

It is important for all MPs to realise that the Government and Parliament are the "heart and soul" of the country.