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Chua meets Dr M over special rights issue

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia deputy secretary-general Datuk David Chua today said he had explained to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday that he had never raised the question of abolishment of special privileges for Malays.

Chua said he had met with the Prime Minister to offer his clarification and was deeply appreciative of Dr Mahathir's understanding on the matter.

In a Press statement today, Chua said he had stressed to Dr Mahathir that he had never at any time raised the question of abolishment as special privileges for Malays was a right enshrined in the Constitution.

He said controversy on the matter arose solely because certain media organisations had incorrectly reported and sensationalised his statement.

Chua, who is also deputy chairman of the Second National Economic Consultative Council, added:

"In the interest of racial harmony in this country, I sincerely urge all Malaysians to refrain from raising the issue any further."

Controversy arose when Utusan Malaysia on Monday published a front-page report headlined "Abolish Malay privileges".

Chua was reported in the article to have called on the Government to abolish Malay special rights with regard to the policy on the restructuring of society if it (the Government) wanted to see Malays become progressive and able to compete with other races.

The interview with Utusan Malaysia was given to clarify a Far Eastern Economic Review report on the same issue.

Later clarifying his comments as reported in Utusan Malaysia, Chua had said that he was talking about special assistance and policies.

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