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Teachers welcome PM's move to settle their woes

P. Chandra Sagar

IPOH, Wed. - Two teachers' unions today welcomed the move by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to try and resolve any problem between teachers and the Government.

"It is heartening to note that the Prime Minister has taken a keen interest and is serious about resolving the issue.

This will certainly help in removing obstacles and dilemmas in the education system," National Union of Teaching Profession secretary-general N. Siva Subramaniam, said today

He added that teachers should not be entirely blamed for being hostile towards the Government.

Instead, he said, investigations should be carried out against the Education Ministry and district education offices which could also be responsible for turning teachers against the Government.

"The initiative by the Prime Minister to meet the teachers is a good and wise move to help overcome the present negative scenario," he said.

He was commenting on Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday that he would be meeting teachers and union leaders to foster rapport and resolve problems between teachers and the Government.

The Prime Minister made the statement after launching the national-level Teachers' Day celebration here.

Siva Subramaniam also said teachers on their part should not bring in politics into the classrooms which was unethical as their duties were to educate students and not instil negative thoughts.

"In other countries such activities are barred in the education system but Malaysia practises democracy. However, this must not be abused," he added.

Siva Subramaniam, who is also Cuepac's president, said the union for civil servants and NUTP were discussing the "talking points" to be presented to the Prime Minister.

Congress of Teachers' Unions in Education Service secretary-general Shahul Hamid Mydin Shah said it was unfortunate that some teachers had political inclinations instead of carrying out duties as educators professionally.

"Teachers must know how to differentiate politics and their duties to the profession," he added.

"The Prime Minister's willingness to meet teachers goes to show that he wants to know in-depth the problems faced by them."

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