

Moral education not effective: PM

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'Religious teachers not giving guidance but politicising'

PETALING JAYA, Wed: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the present system used to safeguard the morals of students is not functioning.

Expressing concern over moral decadence among the young, the prime minister said government schools hold moral and religious lessons but they seem to have no effect on schoolchildren.

"I don't know what is

being taught during religious classes as students seem to have no morals at all."

He said the cabinet committee on social ills will meet by next week to discuss the problem.

He was asked to comment on a case where four Year Two pupils were caught performing oral sex in a classroom in a Taiping school.

One of them claimed that they were re-enacting

what he had seen while watching a pornographic VCD with his parents the previous night.

Mahathir said if children are properly taught, they would not do such rude acts.

"What can be seen is that the system that has been used to safeguard the morals of students is not functioning.

"We know that in schools, religious teachers are giving more impor-

tance to politics and inciting hatred against the government, than to teaching religious lessons."

This was one of the reasons why some students lack religious knowledge and turn to Satan worship, he said at the RMAF base in Subang, on his return from Uganda where he attended the four-day Global 2001 Smart Partnership International Dialogue in Kampala.

He also visited Yemen.