

# 'Nothing wrong if Malays go to Chinese schools'

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Mon:** The effectiveness of national schools will not be affected by the growing number of Malay pupils going to Chinese vernacular schools.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said by going to Chinese-type school, Malay pupils will have a better relationship with Chinese pupils.

"They (Malay pupils) can at least have a closer relation with the Chinese pupils.

"And because they learn Chinese language, they will better understand the Chinese culture," he told a press conference after opening the Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) gallery here today.

Mahathir said this when asked to comment on the statement by the National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam yesterday that 60,000 Malay pupils are attending Chinese schools throughout the country.

Siva also called on the

Education Ministry to conduct a thorough review of this trend which he claimed could affect the effectiveness of the national schools as agents for national unity.

When asked about NUTP's list of 200 schools allegedly practising racial segregation, Mahathir said the government will have to investigate the claim.

Last night, Mahathir said the government will get to the bottom of the racial segregation issue in schools, which is said to be raising suspicions that it is trying to do away with vernacular schools.

"Maybe there were some officers who planned it for their own convenience.

"I really do not know, unless I get to the bottom of it," he said.

He added that the streaming of students by race should not be made an issue that will antagonise any race, because it is not the government's policy to segregate students by race.