
PAS denies claims about **political coaching in kindies**

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KUALA LUMPUR: PAS has denied allegations that its kindergartens practise a "hate-the-Government" policy and have told the authorities to substantiate their claims.

The party invited the authorities to visit its kindergartens to find out the truth.

PAS secretary-general Nasharudin Mat Isa, who described the charge as "another anti-Islam propaganda," said the intended closure of the kindergartens would infringe on the constitutional right to freedom of education.

The party said it was ridicu-

lous that four- and five-year-old children could possibly understand politics when they even had difficulty learning a simple *doa* (prayer), he said yesterday.

On Monday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government may close down all PAS-sponsored kindergartens to stop political indoctrination of young children.

The Prime Minister said the Government would study whether the kindergartens had broken any law. It may introduce new laws to stop children from being used, he added.

Nasharudin said, "In our case, all the kindergartens have a uniform syllabus and teachers abide by it. The authorities are free to inspect our syllabus."

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad said his ministry would discuss the matter with the states as they were in charge of religious education.

"We can only act against kindergartens that register under the Education Act, 1996," he said after meeting four representatives of Al-Azhar University at his office here.