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Take common stand on issues affecting nation, BN's Chinese-based parties

IPOH, Sun. - All five Chinese-based parties in the Barisan Nasional should take a common stand on issues affecting the nation, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

He said such a view was important to complement the position adopted by Umno and the Government.

"The Chinese community will be confused if these parties adopted different views on Government policies," he said after opening the Perak Gerakan annual delegates' conference at a hotel here.

He said the DAP criticised these parties and took the opportunity to create issues to gain political mileage.

Dr Lim said this in response to Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's concern that the Malays would shift towards extremism should the Chinese community become more fanatical.

Dr Lim, who is Primary Industries Minister, said the Gerakan and MCA had an informal dialogue on current issues two weeks ago.

"We want the LDP and SAPP in Sabah and SUPP in Sarawak to join us on discussions involving the Chinese. We will be getting in touch with their leaders on this matter."

Dr Lim said he was reluctant to express the views of his party because other parties had a different stand or would take an opposite approach.

He added that just as Umno was taking steps to check religious extremism among the Malays and Muslims, the five (BN Chinese based parties) must also play a constructive role in monitoring a similar situation in the community.

He said issues like the Vision School, teaching of Science and Mathematics using English and proposal to integrate students from different streams could be discussed in detail.

"We can convey our stand to the Cabinet and the Prime Minister."

He said everyone must act on Dr Mahathir's concern that racial extremism was getting worse among the younger generation instead of merely agreeing with him.

"The point that they are not working, playing and eating together do not augur well for the future."