

24/12/2002

12 NGOs submit memo over English switch

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - A group of 12 non-governmental organisations today submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urging the Government to re-examine the implementation of teaching of Science and Mathematics in English in Tamil schools.

Malaysian Tamil Education Research and Development Foundation president M. Manogar, the group's spokesman, said in the long run the language switch would be detrimental to children attending Tamil schools.

He said Tamil schools had become a sanctuary for poor Tamils.

"The UPSR results this year indicate that Tamil schools achieved an 81 per cent pass in Mathematics and 75 per cent pass in Science and 198 students scored seven As in the examination," he said at a Press Conference held at the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall after handing over the memorandum to Dr Mahathir, which was received by his private secretary Mohd Shafiq Abdullah in Putrajaya.

Present were Jiao Zong's vice-president Loot Ting Yee.

Manogar said the Education Ministry's decision not to provide teaching aids to schools with fewer than 150 students and which were not on government land would deny at least 60 per cent of Tamil schools from benefiting.

Asked why the groups did not go through MIC, Manogar said they had tried.

The 12 NGOs are Group of Concerned Citizens, Malaysian Tamil Education Research and Development Foundation, Malaysian Dravidian Association, Malaysian Indian Youth Council, the Academy of Tamil Studies, Malaysia Tamil Neri Kalagam, SUARAM Pulau Pinang, Port Klang Hindu Youth Organisation, United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia, The United Chinese School Teachers Association of Malaysia, Yayasan Pembangunan Pendidikan Bahasa Tamil Negri Perak and Malaysia Democratic Students and Youth Movement.