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Multi-racial look at new school system

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Deputy Education Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin said the committee to review the school system will comprise academicians of the different faiths.

He said this was to ensure that the school system met the needs of the multi-racial society in the country.

"There is actually no reason for parents to place their children in religious schools, as this deprives them of mainstream education," he said after attending the Puteri Umno Hari Raya open house here.

"We have sufficient religious teachers and time allocated for children in national schools to receive a sound religious education."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will chair the committee to be set up next month.

Last Friday, Dr Mahathir said the Government will review the school system to improve the quality of education and ensure it is in accordance with the National Education Policy.

Aziz said if religious schools were closed, it was not possible for the Government to absorb all their teachers as most of them were not qualified.

"I am not saying they do not know their religion, it is just that they are not trained to teach and the methodology they use is different," he said.

About 12,000 students from the 250 to 300 religious schools are expected to be placed in national schools.