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Ulterior motive against use of English in schools

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IT is quite surprising that the Government's laudable initiative to teach Science and Mathematics in English has provoked some perplexing and vociferous reactions from educationists and politicians.

The vested interests of particular groups that have a myopic and glaucomic perception of the initiative, rendering them incapable of perceiving its validity and far-reaching significance, could be behind this.

They can't seem to see the forest for the trees.

The Chinese educationists, in particular, feel threatened that the vernacular nature of their school system would be adversely affected.

And so are the Indians who are likewise concerned with the fate of Tamil schools that are already in dire straits.

Unlike other countries which do not entertain a parallel system of vernacular schools to the national one, Malaysia has been accommodating to reflect its pluralistic image.

It has never been its intention to undermine the vernacular system or cultural identity.

If nothing else, it has encouraged these cultural activities by designating them as official national functions or celebrations.

Any sensible and responsible individual or organisation would appreciate the Government's efforts to create a knowledge-based community.

What is disconcerting is that certain Barisan Nasional and Opposition parties are manipulating this issue for shortterm political gain.

Likewise, Malaybased organisations and non-governmental organisations feel threatened and give "reasons" why the move should not be implemented, or delayed.

They are, in fact, not serving the interests of the people and the nation.

One must acknowledge that the Government is courageous enough to take the bull by the horns and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, rightly, is in no mood to play to the gallery for he knows that what he is doing is to safeguard future generations.

Political expediency, chauvinistic charades and academic rigma-role should take a back seat, for this is the time to support the Government