

13/03/2003

`No political agenda on SAR issue'

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Pas today maintained it does not have a political agenda in championing the Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR or People's Religious Schools) issue, saying that the party only wanted to ensure the schools continue to become an alternative to the national school system.

Its Youth chief, Mahfuz Omar, also said the party had not influenced the private religious schools or their students to be anti-Government.

"Imposing a blanket decision to halt the per capita grant to the SAR is a punishment to a crime which has not been proven," said Mahfuz, who is also Pokok Sena Member of Parliament.

Pas has entrusted its Youth wing to handle its "Save the SAR" campaign which was launched soon after the Government announced last October that funding to these schools had been stopped.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said that the decision was made because the schools had deviated from their syllabus and taught students to hate the Government.

The Youth wing and an independent body - Gerakan Rakyat Selamatkan SAR (People's Movement to Save SAR) - had also submitted separate memoranda to the Malay Rulers seeking reinstatement of the funding to the schools.

(END)