

27/05/2003

Truant MPs must pull up their socks

Noel F. D'Oliveiro

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning to absentee parliamentarians (NST, May 24) should awaken those who take their position for granted.

Members of Parliament who play truant have made a mockery of Parliament. They must be held to account for this negligence.

All parliamentarians have a role to play in maintaining the relevance of the House and strengthening its effectiveness as a legislative body.

MPs are expected to provide a link between the Government and the people who elected them.

The direction of the Government rests in their hands in this respect.

They are there to represent us, indeed, they speak for our hopes, aspirations and needs.

The success of government policies and development programmes depends to a large extent on their participation in the deliberations in Parliament.

There is widespread concern that the enthusiasm they show to win votes before the elections all but vanishes when they are elected.

This calls for the setting up of a code of conduct to reconcile their responsibilities as parliamentarians with their personal interests.

For MPs to meet public expectations, there is a greater need for a constant review of their role and functions.

Since they enjoy so many perks, MPs should discharge their responsibilities to the fullest.

Their voices must be heard in order to ensure the concerns of their constituencies are reflected in the resolutions.

Let them be reminded that they should not take electoral victories for