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#### Unity clubs for secondary schools

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - All secondary schools will have unity clubs to promote racial tolerance and patriotism among students next year, National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Seri Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman said today.

She said her ministry and the Education Ministry had done preliminary studies to ensure that the formation of the multi-racial club, suggested by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was sustainable and would help achieve the desired goals.

She said the need to replace all 1,500 Rukun Negara clubs with the new club was necessary as the latter would help bring students closer.

She said it was important that schools populated largely by one race encouraged other races to participate in school programmes, especially co-curricular activities.

She also called on the private sector to support the activities of unity clubs.

She said racial polarisation in schools would worsen if not curbed now.

"My ministry will help the clubs organise activities such as talks, study programmes and work camps to speed up racial integration."

Several schools in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur established the club under a pilot project last year and it has shown results.

"We are also considering setting up the clubs in primary schools to instil racial tolerance in students from an early age," she said after officiating at the pre-launch of the "Saya Anak Malaysia" campaign.

The campaign aims to bridge the gap among the races. During the campaign, items including cassettes, compact discs, stickers, and calendars will be distributed in schools.