

Kula: MIC stance on debates obsolete
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DAP vice-chairperson and MP for Ipoh Barat, M Kulasegaran, expressed disappointment with the stance of MIC deputy president Dr S Subramaniam that his party was not keen to debate issues with the opposition.

Dr Subramaniam was reacting to a developing trend for debates between leaders of political parties on issues of national and ethnic import.

The trend showed a spike in the wake of last Saturday's keenly-followed televised debate between MCA president Dr Chua Soik Lek and DAP secretary-general and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

"I'm disappointed with the stance of the MIC deputy leader on the need for debates," said Kulasegaran (left) while visiting flash flood- affected areas in his constituency in Ipoh this morning.

"Dr Subramaniam appears caught in a time warp. These are times when a more educated and aware public wants to know the position and calibre of political leaders in the testing conditions of public debate," opined the three-term legislator.

Dr Subramaniam, the Human Resources Minister, was reported by Bernama to have said: "I feel it is not necessary for us (to hold debate), but if there people who want to do, they can do it ... but we will not do it."

Kulasegaran said rising public awareness is forcing politicians to be quick and savvy on their feet on national and ethnic concerns.

"Consequently, people want to see if elected politicians can stand on their feet and deliver an explanation and defence of their policy positions," said Kula.

"The willingness of leaders to subject their stances to public debate and scrutiny would reflect on their capability to lead, though that quality alone is not the whole of the range of abilities that he or she requires these days," explained Kula.

"Nevertheless, the ability to debate is an important requirement in these days of television's pervasive presence, and so a reluctance to submit to its test reflects poorly on a leader," argued Kula.

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