

Hindraf expresses concern over debate on Tamil schools

MalaysiaKini.com

May 15, 2013

The Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) aligned to P Waythamoorthy has urged the federal government to put a lid on discussions over abolishing vernacular education.

In a press statement yesterday, Hindraf national adviser N Ganesan said Tamil schools are "part and parcel" of the Malaysian education system.

NONE "What Hindraf seeks is to consolidate primary education of Indian children through a strengthening of this part of the system. It is ridiculous for anyone to suggest otherwise at this juncture," he said.

Ganesan said that recent suggestions by former Court of Appeal judge Mohd Noor Abdullah and UiTM pro-chancellor Abdul Rahman Arshad to abolish vernacular schools would only cause national disunity.

"(It) does not bode well for reconciliation in the short term and for constructing a truly multiracial society in the longer term," he said.

Mutual understanding

Ganesan said that the reality is that Malaysia is a multiracial society where there must be mutual understanding of sensitivities across ethnic boundaries and such rules cannot be flouted to play to the gallery.

"This is truly (a) test (of) the maturity of Malaysians," he said.

Volatile talks about abolishing vernacular education were reignited on Sunday during a forum titled 'GE13 post-mortem: Muslim leadership and survival' in Kuala Lumpur.

Both Mohd Noor and Abdul Rahman said that Chinese and Tamil schools had contributed to both minority communities isolating themselves from Malays.

They suggested that such schools be abolished in favour of national schools which uses the Malay language exclusively as a medium of instruction.

However, critics claimed that vernacular schools were already enshrined in the

Malaysian constitution and should not be up for debate.

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/230163>