

## **Perkasa: Pick integration over vernacular schools**

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Perkasa has called on the government to stop aiding vernacular schools and to focus on national schools instead, in order to foster racial integration.

The right-wing movement, which is often accused of stoking racial tension, sees vernacular education as a stumbling bloc to integration.

Perkasa made the call in response to the board of directors of the United Chinese Schools Committees Association of Malaysia (Dong Zong), which urged the government to recognise the United Examination Certificate (UEC).

The UEC examination, offered in Chinese secondary schools, is similar to the STPM examination.

Perkasa education bureau chairperson Prof Mohd Amir Sharifuddin warned that endorsing the UEC examination would be akin to "betraying" the national education policy.

"If the UEC is recognised, Perkasa would view the government as a destructive agent to national integration.

"The move will only spur the Chinese community to send their children to Chinese schools until the highest level, where they would not mix with children of other races," Mohd Amir said in a statement.

Noting that the national education policy is a key integration tool, he asked: "How can schools of different mediums aid integration? Find another country where there is such a practice."

Describing Dong Zong's call as a "charade", Mohd Amir said whenever an election is around the corner, that is when the movement would make all kinds of demands.

"And this is when Perkasa sees the government agreeing to their demands.

"But Perkasa urges the government to cease doing so and to be stern on the issue of building racial integration from the school level," he added.

Apart from students of all races mixing together, Mohd Amir said, national schools would also allow parents of all races to integrate.

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