

HRP: Gov't must step in and give Tamil schools land
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The BN government can undo the 53 years of social injustice to the marginalised Indian community by providing government land to convert the 523 partially aided Tamil schools in the country into fully-aided government schools, says the Human Rights Party Malaysia (HRP).

NONEAt present these Tamil schools, mostly in dilapidated condition and without basic education amenities, are situated in private or estate land and the government's only funding goes to paying the teachers' salaries.

HRP said this would be the best Merdeka gift for a community that has not enjoyed its share of the country's economic cake as the other races have.

It argues that with better facilities and a conducive teaching environment, education can turn the community around and make right the economic imbalance currently faced, but only if equal education opportunities are also given.

The catch is the ministry's outdated condition that to be recognised as a fully aided school the institution must occupy a minimum of 10 acres land area, and land belongs to the state not the Tamil schools.

NONEHRP pro-tem secretary general P Uthayakumar (left) told Malaysiakini today that while land is expensive, state governments need to make the necessary sacrifice to pave the way for a brighter future for the community.

Uthayakumar has written a letter dated Aug 18 to Premier Najib Abdul Razak and his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin, about making all Tamil schools fully aided government schools.

Uthayakumar said, "We want a permanent and final solution to these 523 Tamil schools and not a piece-meal and supposedly `granting kosong (vacant) land titles one by one' to these schools."

'End empty promises'

"We do not want to hear the hollow empty promises of politicians on this matter, which always ...does not materialise," he said.

effingham tamil school land issue 231209 srjk(t) effingham "These kosong political statements are never in writing by the Education Ministry or the state governments, but mere political propaganda, in especially the three Tamil dailies.

"Almost all the time, (they are never) fulfilled by both sides of the political spectrum," said Uthayakumar.

"Furthermore, these schools have been forced to move from one place to another, like nomads, at the whims and fancies of the government without getting permanent building structures," he said.

Uthayakumar questioned why the Indians have been denied their basic right to a conducive learning environment for the past 53 years.

“Is it because the mere 8 percent ethnic minority Indians in Malaysia (are) almost all poor or in the lower income group and are politically powerless?” he asked.

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