

Samy: Vernacular schools here to stay
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MIC president S Samy Vellu has lambasted fresh calls for the abolishment of vernacular schools, saying those making such demands are acting against the federal constitution.

NONE "Tamil and Chinese schools are here to stay and no one should question their existence," he said in a statement today.

Such calls were "mischievous" and "smacked of racism", Samy Vellu (left) said, and therefore such calls should be stopped immediately or risk "unwanted consequences".

He was commenting on statements by several Malay Consultative Council (MPM) leaders who want the federal government to implement a single national school system.

The MIC, he said, would ensure the continued existence of Tamil schools and that such schools flourished.

"I hope individuals and groups under the guise of NGOs will be more sensitive and understand the history of the country and the people," added the former works minister, who lost his Sungei Siput parliamentary seat in the 2008 general election tsunami.

MPM's statement on vernacular schools has sent alarm bells ringing among the youth wings of MCA and MIC as well, which have lodged separate police reports on the matter.

Vernacular schools are defined in Section 28 of the Education Act. Last October, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said the government would consider the views of the people before making any decision to implement a single stream school system.

He said the government would only change any policy if it had the people's agreement, otherwise it would retain the existing policy.

Yesterday, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin also dismissed MPM, stating that vernacular schools were agreed upon by the nation's founding fathers and guaranteed under the federal constitution.

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