

**1M'sia... but missionary schools neglected**  
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Penangites, many from missionary schools, are unhappy with the deteriorating quality of education and discipline in them due to lack of funding from the federal government.

In response to the current sad state of affairs, the P. Ramlee MIC branch is taking the lead in organising a campaign to seek the return of the schools' former glory, as maintained by religious missionaries centuries years ago.

However, P. Ramlee branch MIC chief Dr B Anthony (*right*) lamented that these efforts would be futile if the schools continue to be spooned out money unlike the others which receive the full federal funding.

Anthony, a medical doctor by profession, said the schools were not only deteriorating physically but their social problems were rising at an alarming rate.

"Teachers in these schools also lack civic-mindedness and have been found to be abusing the children until the state social welfare department has to become involved," he claimed at a press conference in Penang yesterday.

He challenged Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin to clarify whether the same mission and vision of 1Malaysia concept applied to these schools.

Partiality under question

"We are all Malaysians, if the system of education in the missionary schools are mainstream, why should they not be fully funded by the government? Why the partiality in handling these schools?" he queried, as he shared stories of his alma mater, St Xavier's Institution.

Anthony was referring to the missionary school model which is said to reflect what is seen in Najib's 1Malaysia concept.



Last year, Najib, (*left*) while officially opening the Conference of Christian Mission Schools in Kuala Lumpur, had paid tribute to mission schools and their role in nation building.

He had said they had a 'special ethos' which promoted unity, very much like his vision of 1 Malaysia.

"The ethos of mission schools shaped the values and beliefs of students which is in line with 1 Malaysia," he had said during the event at his alma mater, St John's Institution.

As for funding, the Education Ministry had said it will provide support to schools which identify problems they face through the School Improvement Programme (SIP).

However, it is uncertain if the programme embraces missionary schools.

While launching the SIP at the Vision School in USJ15 in April this year, Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, had said that schools were not left alone to solve their problems.

In Penang, Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has allocated 24 missionary schools and nine Chinese secondary schools a total of RM1.87mil from the state government this year.

While handing over the mock cheques to representatives of the schools in Komtar, Lim had likened the aid as "bonus" to the schools.

However, he said the federal government still needed to play its role in helping the schools.

"The state government's allocation will not solve the financial problems of the schools but at least they can use the money to upgrade infrastructure facilities," he had stressed.

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