

**MP Kulasegaran slams Ahmad Zahid's 'unpatriotic' claim**  
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KUALA LUMPUR - Opposition Members of Parliament has expressed dissatisfaction over an allegation that the reason non-Malays are not interested in joining the armed forces is due to lack of patriotism.

M. Kulasegaran (DAP-Ipoh Barat) said lack of patriotism was not a major factor, but a lack of promotional prospects and information on the armed forces were the main reasons why non-Malays were not interested in joining the armed forces.

"It is true that for the various reasons, the non-Malays are reluctant to join the armed forces, but this is certainly not because they are unpatriotic. There is a lack of promotional prospects.

"Many non-Malays who retire from the armed forces are very dejected as their years of sacrifice and service has been not valued and appreciated," he told reporters at Parliament lobby Tuesday.

Thus, he urged Defence Minister Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to withdraw the allegation which he deemed was baseless and irresponsible.

Ahmad Zahid, when replying to Datuk Mohd Jidin Shafee (BN-Setiu) during the Dewan Rakyat sitting earlier Tuesday, had said that the cause of shortage of a certain race in the armed forces was due to the strict discipline, low compensation, no initiative and lack of patriotism.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin (PAS-Bukit Gantang) said the statement made by Ahmad Zahid was unfair and did not reflect the concept of 1Malaysia.

"All Malaysians are keen to defend the country, but there are other elements that caused them to be uninterested in the military.

"Many more of our non-Malays friends fought desperately to defend the country. In sports, for example...very patriotic ... the statement is not good and contravened the 1Malaysia concept, perhaps there might be some other reason," he said. - Bernama

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