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'Chinese education will thrive'

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Social contract allows for vernacular school system, says PM

By D. KANYAKUMARI
and ADRIAN CHAN
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

SHAH ALAM: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has given his assurance that Chinese education will continue to exist and thrive in the country.

The Prime Minister said although some people felt that the ideal situation was to educate everyone under one roof in the same language, it was not part of the country's social contract.

"Our social contract allows for different streams of education and we should just live with it. There is no use in arguing it as it was decided when we became independent.

"If you want to blame, blame Tunku Abdul Rahman or Tun Abdul Razak," he said when opening Gerakan's 44th national delegates conference at the Setia City Convention Centre here yesterday.

Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional chairman, said the future of Malaysia's direction would be charted on the principles of the Social Contract and the Federal Constitution.

"We are the only South-East Asian country, outside of China and Taiwan, which has Chinese education. So, as much as you can complain, you cannot deny the benefit.

"It was during my tenure as Education Minister that the only clause which could have been used against Chinese education, was repealed," he said.



Exchanging pleasantries: Najib greeting MCA president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai with MIC secretary-general A. Sakthivel looking on during Gerakan's delegates conference in Shah Alam.

Najib said regardless of the language used in education, it was vital for all communities to work towards national cohesion and unity.

"National harmony and unity are ideas which we must aspire to achieve," he said.

Earlier, he emphasised the point that Malaysian Chinese were not *pendatang* (immigrants) but "sons of Malaysia", who had contributed a lot towards the development of the country.

"You have done your part. You

were born here, grew up here, and when the time comes, when you die, your ashes will be scattered here.

"That's the reality of it. We are here as Malaysians," he said to loud applause.

Najib said Malaysia would continue to be a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society based on the principle of moderation, adding that this is Barisan's policy.

He said Malaysians need to learn

to judge people based on their content of character and not the colour of their skin.

"We must look at one another as fellow human beings because irrespective of whether Malay, Chinese or Indian or other ethnic groups, there will always be good and bad individuals," he added.



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