

CALL TO ABOLISH VERNACULAR SCHOOLS

PKR MP: Dr M should stop making inflammatory remarks

SUNGAI BULOH: It is high time Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad refrain from making any more inflammatory statements that bring no value to national unity, said PKR deputy information chief Datuk R. Ramanan.

The Sungai Buloh member of parliament and Malaysian Indian Transformation Unit (Mitra) Special Committee chairman said Dr Mahathir's seditious statements involving the national school system, including the call to abolish vernacular schools, were disappointing.

"Dr Mahathir, unfortunately, has chosen to see everything from a racial angle, to ensure he is in the news.

"At 98, he should play the role of bringing Malaysians together instead of creating division via some of his recent statements."

Despite the country and its people being independent for decades, Dr Mahathir still referred to non-Malays as "pendatang", he said.

He initially felt hesitant to respond to the former prime minister's statement, but decided he had to do it to put the record straight.

"With respect, we would like to know if his grandchildren attend private or international schools or are they are in our Sekolah Kebangsaan, like other Malaysians?"

He said Tamil and Chinese vernacular schools were funded by the federal government and had long existed since independence, unlike private schools.

"On average, Chinese primary schools have about 100,000 non-Chinese students, namely Indians and Malays.

"The numbers are about the same for non-Indian students studying at Tamil primary schools.

"These students will play a major role in nation-building in time



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad



Datuk R. Ramanan

to come."

He invited Dr Mahathir to see these schools' contributions to national unity in their programmes and syllabus.

He added that some of the best students had graduated from these primary schools and they were occupying high positions in government and the private sector.

"It is also because of vernacular schools that Malaysians have a grasp of Mandarin and Tamil, (which are) linguistic assets."

He said one of the reasons Malays and Indians were sending their children to these vernacular schools for primary education was because they wanted their children to learn Mandarin or Tamil.