



By Neville D'Cruz

MELBOURNE, Oct 9 (Bernama) -- After enduring years of casual racism at the hands of popular TV programme "Hey Hey It's Saturday", Malaysian-born singer Kamahl has finally lashed out at the show over its controversial "blackfaces" skit.

Kamahl, a.k.a K. Kamalesvaran, a former Hey Hey regular, was drawn into the Jackson Jive sketch -- featuring performers with afro wigs and blacked up faces -- when resident artist Andrew Fyfe flashed a cartoon with the words "Where's Kamahl".

Sydney-based Kamahl, whose "why are people so unkind" comment featured often as a punchline on Hey Hey, told the Daily Telegraph in Sydney he did not watch the show out of

disgust.

"It's really just a desperate attempt at notoriety and publicity," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

"I used to laugh along when I was a guest but deep down I was thinking why are people so unkind. It's just the same old rubbish."

Kamahl, who grew up in Brickfields, said Hey Hey was "devoid of wit" and "desperate".

"It's toilet humour and it should be flushed."

Lead performer in the [Jackson Jive skit](#), Sydney plastic surgeon Dr Anand Deva, said he was genuinely horrified at the reaction the sketch received.

But he was quick to point out the multi-cultural nature of group.

"Out of the six of us, only one is Anglo-Celtic Australian. I'm Sri Lankan-Australian, there's an Indian Australian, a Greek Australian, an Irish-Italian Australian and a Lebanese Australian. We're all Australian," he wrote on The Punch website.

"We all underestimated what the reaction would be, but in the end it was our decision to go on air dressed the way we did."

While Hey Hey host Daryl Somers apologised on-air for the skit when American guest Harry Connick Jr took offence, Kamahl said he did not expect to receive a personal apology.

Wednesday's broadcast was the second of two reunion shows for Hey Hey, which went off air in 1999, and talk has circulated about bringing the show back.

-- BERNAMA