

26/10/1999

NUTP: Investigate others too

JOHOR BARU, Mon. - The National Union of Teaching Profession said today investigations into the issue of politically-motivated hate examination questions should not only centre on the teacher, but also the head-of-subject and headmaster of the school concerned.

NUTP secretary-general N. Siva Subramaniam said while everybody was pointing the finger at the teacher who set the questions, no one had questioned the involvement of the other two parties.

He said the teacher in charge of the subject (mathematics) should also be questioned as it was his responsibility to scrutinise all questions set by teachers for examinations.

The failure of the school principal to detect the "hate questions" was also suspicious as the behaviour of teachers was his responsibility, he said.

"The head-of-subject obviously failed to follow standard procedures. He either did not vet the questions or approved them for reasons best known to him.

"The school principal should have also taken the matter seriously as what his staff was doing was detrimental to students," he said.

Siva Subramaniam was commenting on a 42-year-old teacher of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Jabi near Alor Star who is under fire for setting such questions for his students.

The questions first came to light last week when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad brought it up to illustrate his point about teachers sowing hatred in the classroom.

Dr Mahathir said the mathematics questions set for Form Five students of the school had used the names of politicians and figures linked to the Government.

The same teacher also allegedly set mathematics questions based on logical deductions for Form Four students to test their ability to arrive at explanations based on a given premise.

Siva Subramaniam said as far as he knew, the questions on logical deduction were not part of the mathematics syllabus.

"There is a possibility that the questions set are not according to the syllabus and this is very dangerous for the students who wasted their time answering such questions," he said.

He added it was also ridiculous for the teacher to ask the students to regard the questions as a joke as schools are not the right institution to make silly and offensive jokes.

(END)