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This `jihad' too must be fought

By Azahari Ariffin

I FIND the news in the last fortnight most disturbing. From the interview with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, to the letter from Datuk Abdullah Samsudin (NST, Dec 26,2002) I realise that something drastic must be done if we are to survive and remain competitive in this 21st century.

A case in point is the statement by Dr Mahathir about education, that "the people who run the schools have other ideas", is also true in the case of the armed forces. What was mentioned by Abdullah is only the tip of the iceberg.

When a soldier is not proud to show off his uniform there must be something wrong with his state of mind. Like pupils in school, whom are they to follow, those who are trained to develop their potential to face the modern world, or the ustaz who prepare them for the afterlife?

Then, there was the news that 74,000 pupils of Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR) are still in limbo about their education. How can we just sit back and allow 74,000 potential doctors, engineers and scientists to be turned into ustaz, religious teachers and mujahidin?

It would be a true jihad if we helped these children get a proper education in national schools.

The challenge now is to convince their parents that national schools are superior. And the obvious question is, who is going to do it? I would suggest that Pemuda Umno and Puteri Umno undertake this jihad. They are best qualified.

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