

Muhyiddin, let's see action to improve education
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Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin told Chinese educationist groups (United Chinese School Teachers Association -Jiao Zong) 'Don't politicise teacher shortage issue' (The Star, Monday 19th March, 2012).

But who wants to 'politicise' education? Look at the mirror Muhyiddin, and you will see who is politicising education!

For decades, not just yesterday, Chinese educationist groups have been crying for more and more teachers to cope with the great influx of children attending Chinese schools.

Their desperate cries were just ignored; and now that they are asking again. And you, as minister, are telling them not to politicise the issue.

However this is a long standing issue; and with the coming general election, this is the best time to press for more teachers, because you, as minister, will tend to open your ears now.

Look at the school classrooms in Chinese schools. Each one takes in 50 children, while the ideal size should be 30.

Even with 50 children, there are not enough teachers; and not enough classrooms. You and your deputy ministers should go to the ground and see for yourselves the real situation: classrooms filled up to the brim and the shortage of teachers.

Only after some protests, the Education Ministry has tried to placate the anger and frustration by giving a token number of teachers.

Tokenism is just for show that you are doing something and listening to the cries for help!

And what are MCA ministers doing about Chinese schools, since they are vying for posts in the Cabinet?

Do something substantial for the Chinese schools, if they genuinely care for education for Chinese school children.

It is pointless to talk and do nothing. It is time for action, not mere words.

What is the solution? I have said this before and I repeat here: Bring back normal teachers' training of the 1960s. I remember our teachers, temporary teachers mind you, who went for weekend training.

They were trained during the weekends and school holidays; and they taught us during the weekdays.

Why is it that the Education Ministry cannot solve this simple problem?

Why is it that the ministry officials cannot put their brains to work?

Or is it true that they are not interested in vernacular schools. They want to stress on national schools?

We cannot afford to have bigoted minds; we need globalised minds to reach out and make this nation a vibrant, multi-racial, multi-cultural society where all children can find their own niches and their own interests.

Why suffocate young children with distorted history? Why not give truthful history and let them learn from by it?

I am reminded of a saying of Sir William Drummond as follows:

"He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot reason is a fool; and he that dares not reason is a slave."

Do we have bigots, fools or slaves in the leadership in the Education Ministry?

Are we harbouring racists in schools and in the ministry? If not, why are racists like the principal in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Kulai, not punished?

How many such people are there?

With a bigoted mind, how are we going to staff Chinese schools and Tamil schools with teachers?

There is no way vernacular schools are going to be fully staffed, if the mind is set along tramlines.

Similarly, The Parent Action group for Education Malaysia (Page) has been asking for mathematics and science to be taught in English; but its call has fallen on deaf, bigoted, ears.

So, what is the purpose of asking for feedback when the mind is already set? Isn't it a futile exercise?

We do not need politicised minds; we need sincerity of purpose. Even the ex-prime minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was displeased with the abolition of the teaching of mathematics and science in English.

And now we hear of the need for further feedback to revamp the education system.

Don't waste people's time when your mind is already set.

Another relevant question the Education Ministry should ask is this: Why are most Chinese parents sending their children to Chinese schools and not to National schools?

In my opinion, there are several reasons.

One, children in Chinese schools learn three languages - Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese, English.

Armed with three languages, they have an advantage over children who know only Bahasa Malaysia, with a smattering of English.

Second, China, like India, is booming and is likely to overtake US in commerce and industry; and anyone who wants to do business with China will have an advantage if he knows Mandarin over another who does not. This is pragmatism, not bigotry.

Third, getting a job in the government service is difficult. Just go to any government department and you will find it is loaded with Malay staff; over 90 percent.

Is it true? And where does PM Najib's "1 Malaysia" come in?

Yes, "performance now!" Show it, PM; don't just shout it. Even your deputy declares that he is "Malay first".

So is it any wonder that the education system is "bastardised" just like the NEP has been "bastardised" (Please refer to CIMB CEO Nazir Razak's speech, where he is honest enough to tell the

whole truth).

And so, with such jaundiced minds to contend with, how much can the deputy education minister from MCA do to recruit teachers for Chinese schools?

Then again, MIC faces a bigger task in Tamil schools; and they behave like MIC(e).

Just get the job done; don't just talk. No feedback please, it is a waste of time.

Open up normal schools like the 1960s; and fill up all schools - national, Chinese, Tamil - and train teachers during weekends.

Do it now, not tomorrow, not after the general election. Education Minister Muhyiddin and deputy Wee, deliver the goods now, if you are sincere and honest,.

Parents and Chinese teachers associations do not want to hear yarns. It is time for immediate action.

If you cannot do the job, let others do it.

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