

## **In education, you reap what you sow**

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YOURSAY 'S'pore focused on the best lecturers and the best students while in M'sia, policies on recruitment, promotion and admission were based not on ability.'

All but one tumble in university rankings

your sayPemerhati: In the 1960s, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Universiti Malaya (UM) were roughly of about the same standard as they both recruited the best lecturers from around the world and only admitted the best students from their respective countries.

Singapore has continued with those policies and that has resulted in it maintaining its remarkably high rankings all these years.

Malaysia, on the other hand, gradually changed its policies where recruitment, promotion and admission were based not on ability but on race and religion. Consequently, the standards began to slide and have reached the current low levels.

As long as Umno continues to practice its discriminatory and racist policies in all areas of the public service and the universities, the standards will keep coming down as the many incompetent people who are recruited and put in positions of authority, will not be able to raise standards.

The few competent people who are forced to work under their authority will be disgusted and hence contribute very little, or just go elsewhere.

Abasir: Seriously speaking, Malaysian universities are structured to fail. Right from the political appointees masquerading as vice-chancellors who in turn appoint (as deans and departmental heads) only those who openly and gratefully toe the line, the 'teaching' staff who will do anything to get out of classrooms to the Powerpoint nonsense that passes for teaching.

Almost everything is marked by sheer pretense and incompetence.

Umno knows this as does every education minister who sees his job as a stepping stone to the Prime Minister's Office. Each successive one plays the game to introduce another new blueprint to muddy the murky waters even more.

Former education minister Najib Razak spent billions on his 'smart schools' which no one mentions even in passing today; Muhyuddin Yassin has his National Education Blueprint.

Thousands of man hours have been spent on compiling million ringgit reports by a succession of retired director-generals while the system continues to sink into the morass engineered by Umno for its short-term gains.

Magnus: Congratulations to Umno-BN's winning education strategy to increasingly stupefy Malaysia from knowledge into ignorance, so I agree that the local movie 'Tanda Putera' should be part of the curriculum.

TheSilentMajority: With the abundance of talent, intellect and diversity we have in this country, we should trump most of our Asian neighbours.

However, thanks to political interfering, racial dogma and just plain poor leadership, we are laughing stocks.

Hajile Leumas: This is so embarrassing and shame on the minister of education and our education system. He should be very proud of his achievement - from worse to worst!

His KPI should be to improve our local universities' world ranking to below 100 in the next five years.

KDP: It's high time the government gave full autonomy to the five core universities to run their own affairs from intakes to teacher quality.

Their obstinacy at present is creating a future pool of unemployable graduates who will launch a Tahrir Square event when they have no jobs and nothing to eat.

Onyourtoes: I think we should stop harassing our universities for their poor rankings. Year-to-year movement of rankings are meaningless.

Our universities are mostly faced with structural issues - from sub-standard lecturers, non-merit intake of students, lack of research orientation and devious and dubious grading of students. All these require medium to long-term solutions.

I would like to throw a challenge to our Malay-first DPM and all universities - we shall give them five years starting from now to change their fortune.

We have been talking, whining and arguing about poor rankings for a long time

already - at least 20 years I think - so another five years of earnest effort would not hurt.

Do it now; don't worry about your next year's ranking. Work towards your ranking in five years' time.

Opah: Malaysia has two universities in the top 100. They are Monash University (69) and the University of Nottingham (75). Now, can anyone spot the difference between these world-class universities and the true Malaysian ones?

Parent: Here we go again. Rankings. Why hasn't Singapore produced any Nobel laureates? Any major discovery/invention out of Singapore?

Just curious about the correlation between rankings and actual scientific output. After all, Singapore does very well in rankings.

Twenty years ago everyone thought that Singapore will produce a Nobel laureate within 20 years. Still nothing. Doing 'cutting edge' research is not the same as actually making scientific discoveries/ breakthroughs. That is just wishful thinking.

Often inventions/discoveries are the result of serendipity. Which is the precise reason why no true-blue Singapore-educated Singaporean will be walking the red carpet in Stockholm for a long, long time.

Malaysia is more likely to succeed than Singapore because we are freer. Parents can choose how to educate their children. Fact is I won't be placing any bets on conventionally-educated (school) children. They are too brainwashed and disempowered.

I have my eyes on the growing number of home-schooled kids. You don't need any 'world class' university/degree for everything. Most times what you have inside your skull is more important.

Cantabrigian: Who cares about Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)? Malaysia has its own MIT - Mara Institute of Technology. It is way above world-class that it has to be ranked in its own league, not some wishy-wishy QS ranking.

MIT of Malaysia is a seat of learning where professors are appointed based on datukship and students are given admission irrespective of result. Its groundbreaking research includes the anthropological study on the effect of 'Tanda Putera' on young Malay voters.

Membership in Umno is a must, otherwise you will not be able to graduate with flying colours. Who cares about Singapore? Screw QS ranking, Mara Institute of Technology, endless possibilities.

Babylon: Actually this is all a ploy to keep our students from going to work overseas. Talent Corp can close up. No foreign country will want to employ graduates from such low-ranking universities.

Time to save money to send our children for a decent education, or take it private.

AB Sulaiman: Expect these rankings to go down further as long as government education policies go along the lines of religion and race as they have been all along.

Enough is enough; future education policies must adhere to national interest, not to short sighted priorities of religion and race.

Vijay47: Fortunately for the pride of our country, Utusan Malaysia will not take this Jewish-manipulated report lying down. They will demand to know what was the secret agenda Quacquarelli Symonds had in mind by coming out with the report now.

Umno will be having its elections soon and the release of the report obviously is a plot to influence the results so that a group subservient to Western interests will come to power.

The unreliability of the analysis can also be seen in the fact that all 10 top universities come from Christian countries. Has the West forgotten that it was the Golden Age of Islam 1,000 years ago that brought progress and knowledge to the whole world?

Nevertheless, Malaysia's standing is not shameful since we are among the nations that improved over the last six years compared to 64 out of 83 American universities that fell in standard. This proves that Malaysian education indeed is world-class.

It is revealing that after Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin left, Oxford declined from 5th position to 6th.

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