

## **Mahathir is source of the rot in education**

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YOURSAY 'Mahathir, you were education minister once. If we trace the source in the downward spiral of the quality of education, it will probably lead back to you.'

Mahathir: RM20mil consultancy job? I can do it

your sayPemerhati: It was actually former PM Dr Mahathir Mohamad who started the rot in the universities in a big way when he became premier and started his grand plan to impress the majority Malays to stay in power and plunder the country.

The plan was simply to implement an apartheid-like system that favoured the majority Malays in all areas.

When it came to the universities, the previous system of employing the best lecturers and professors from around the world was changed to selecting lecturers and professors almost entirely from the Malay community, even if they were of very low calibre.

The same thing happened when it came to the admission of students. A large number of extremely mediocre Malay students were admitted and made into graduates and professionals while brilliant non-Malay students were denied places.

Consequently standards plunged drastically and now Mahathir is again as usual bluffing and trying to put the blame for the low standards elsewhere.

Swipenter: Indeed, Mahathir deliberately started the rot in education so much so nowadays our universities and other higher institutions of learning are churning out automatons and not many thinking and critical graduates.

This is one way for the ruling elites to exert conformity throughout the (Malay) population where individualism, critical thinking and creativity are not encouraged. A conforming populace would ensure a steady vote bank.

After graduation, these automatons would be employed as civil servants and attend brainwashing refresher courses conducted by BTN (Biro Tatanegara) to instil "nationalism" in them.

With this strategy Umno hopes to retain political power forever and with political power comes the power to oppress people not aligned to Umno, and the circle goes round and round. The end result is that the whole civil service is politicised and Umno-ised.

Now he is asking RM20,000,000 personally to do the same thing again!

Anak Perak: Mahathir, I totally disagree with you on your reason for the drop in ranking of our universities, because you never experience it and you were not a victim. The reasons are as clear as daylight - the quota system, special treatment, and mediocrity instead of meritocracy.

In my four years at Universiti Malaya, I witnesses at least two brilliant lecturers leaving the university for the National University of Singapore (NUS), students and lecturers who were not qualified but put in place because of government policies, students who took five to eight years to finish a four-year course, and the list goes on.

So please do not insult the intelligence of the rakyat and just admit the truth. As long as we are in denial and always avoid the truth, there is no way we can solve the problem.

On the RM20 million, why would you need this consultancy job or the money? Just ask your children how they make their billions in such a short period of time. That would be far easier.

Sirach: Mahathir is probably right in dissing McKinsey's expertise in the education field.

However, wasn't Mahathir also, when he was PM, enamoured of the skills of one Kenichi Ohmae, an erstwhile McKinsey man, who reputedly served as a key adviser and was instrumental in, amongst others, advising the PM on the Proton misadventure and the foray into heavy industry, such as Perwaja Steel?

SpongeBob: Now, Mahathir has realised too there are too many private universities. Some of these universities are just milking money from students who don't fit or qualify for tertiary education.

These universities are just awarding degrees blindly and they are protected by political patronage.

If one works in one of these universities, one would realise the fraud, the leniency

in courses and examinations, their attendance and the expatriate lecturers they hire who are all camouflaged and decorated by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) requirements and protected by political patronage in their non-compliance and wrongdoings.

Abasir: "Mahathir also weighed in on the country's poor university rankings, saying that it may have been a result of hasty expansion of tertiary education."

And how much did fellows in the Education Ministry make as they kept handing out "university" recognition certificates to shop lot colleges operated by property developers and businessmen who claim to be academic 'doctors'?

And how much did that 'quality assurance' outfit supervising these 'universities' make each time they approve the programmes and the lecturers? And who set up this 'you help me, I help you' system of crony businessmen in the education business?

And who set up this revolving door where ex-Education Ministry director-generals get appointed as vice-chancellors of the very universities they once licensed?

Bernard Phillips: I did think RM20 million is an excessive amount until Dr M intervened in this issue, and then I realised that we got off cheap. If Dr M was still PM it would probably have been much more, bearing in mind that Dr M does not come cheap.

Malaysians can easily reflect on all those mind-boggling amounts paid for contracts, tenders, etc. He was the most corrupted leader we ever had.

But what I find more disturbing is that he is still being invited to events like this Jeffery Cheah Foundation. Don't people realise that more than 51 percent of the population have rejected Umno - and effectively Dr M and all his past policies - at the last election?

Absalom: Mahathir, you were education minister once. If we trace the source in the downward spiral of the quality of education, it will probably lead back to you.

You and your successors have never been interested in excellence in education. You were only interested in education as a political tool to win elections and have a monopoly on power.

We are now paying the price of that now, with generations of the products of poor, non-merit-based education system now assimilated in all professions including

teaching the future generations.

Is it any wonder that our university rankings are so low? The irony is our even our education minister has no faith in local consultants and experts.

Perhaps this country will be better off managed by foreign consultants than local conmen.

PS: Study Mahathir's words carefully. It's autumn time in Umno, leaves must fall for a new generation of young leaves to come into full bloom in spring. The adage "in politics there are no foes or friends" but survival of a dynasty rings true.

For A Better Malaysia: I can do the National Education Blueprint for free - just survey the ministers and where they had sent their kids and grandchildren for schooling, and use the system there as our national system.

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