

## **What did Cikgu Fadli do?**

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The fate of primary school teacher Mohd Fadli Mohamed Salleh will be discussed at the Education Support Services Disciplinary Council today.

The council is reported to be deliberating whether Fadli (above) will be sacked or demoted, after the teacher responded to the council's show-cause letter.

The teacher had on Sept 22 received a letter from the Education Ministry stating he had breached civil service conduct, through his postings on Facebook, and could face a demotion or sacking.

The show cause letter has prompted public outcry, with many parents saying they agree with the teacher's criticism of the national education syllabus.

## **Comparing with developed nations**

What did Cikgu Fadli say?

On Nov 15 last year, he uploaded a posting answering a question on whether the national syllabus is suitable, given the current needs, class capacity and school facilities.

He said it is unfair to just compare the syllabus, without considering the facilities, capacity and time allocated for teaching a subject in national schools.

Some classes in national schools have up to 50 students - double that of classes in countries like Sweden and Finland - and this has an impact on how teachers teach and students learn, he said.

"In China, 15 hours a week is used to teach mathematics. In Malaysia, it is only two hours and 30 minutes.

"Yes, five periods a week only equals two hours and 30 minutes. That's six folds less than what a student in China is exposed to.

"How could someone who gets two to three hours of lessons a week compete with someone who gets 15 hours of lessons a week? he asked.

The SK Gombak (1) teacher added that the facilities available in national schools are also far behind that of developed nations, where teachers are even equipped

with a teacher's aide.

"Their internet coverage, the use of smart boards and other school facilities are up to date. But here, some teachers' desks are from the 1960s and in some schools, students sit on chairs which are decades old. They just get fixed each time they break.

"Not all places enjoy high-speed internet. Everyone knows this. So it's not just about ensuring the syllabus is comparable to developed nations. If the facilities, the class size and teaching time do not commensurate, how can we perform at par?

"It's like putting a Ferrari engine into a Kancil car and expecting it to go as fast as a Ferrari. It will fall apart piece by piece," he said.

### **BM syllabus too heavy**

On Nov 30, Cikgu Fadli uploaded another posting regarding the Year 1 Bahasa Malaysia syllabus, which he said was too heavy for young learners and could turn them off from learning.

"The syllabus seems to try to make national laureates out of students by the time

they graduate from primary school. Have pity on our children.

"They are treated like lab rats or robots without feelings, simply to appease higher-ups so their key performance indicators are met.

"Serious talk, change needs to happen in our education system. So many things need to change so that the system will be more advanced and our children will be happy to go to school. Think about it," he said.

### **'Teach them to read first'**

Last June, Cikgu Fadli also uploaded a video onto Facebook, showing him teaching a student how to spell, in a Mathematics class.

He said half of the students in that class had poor literacy skills, but the syllabus required them to learn at a much higher level.

Fadli added that even though he was teaching Mathematics, students still need to read instructions and they are struggling to do this.

Many of the students were lagging because schools were either closed or operating online only for two years over the movement control order, he said.

"If I have the power to do so, I would ask all teachers to stop teaching according to the syllabus or textbooks.

"Students need to be streamed between those who can and can't read well, and teachers should concentrate on teaching the basics of reading, writing and arithmetics first.

"If only two out of five classes have students who can read well, then those two classes can go ahead with the usual syllabus. The others should be taught to read and do basic arithmetics," he said.

### **Not the first time**

Last night, Cikgu Fadli in a Facebook live-stream said this is not the first time he had faced repercussions over his criticism.

Earlier, he said, he was about to be transferred away from a school when he asked parents to provide a ream of A4 paper per student.

Following that, he said he was hauled up by the District Education Office and had his attendance and performance probed.

Fadli said even though his records were spotless, he was transferred to another school on the basis that he had been at that school for too long.

Amid the controversy, Education Minister Mohd Radzi Jidin said he is open to meeting with the teacher to discuss his comments.

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