

## **YOURSAY | Patriotism more than an emblem on school uniforms**

**Malaysiakini**

**24 April 2025**

**Yoursay**

YOURSAY | 'It should not be forcefully applied.'

MarioT: During my school days, we were taught that our national flag was our identity as a nation and our national pride.

The flag-raising ceremony and singing of the national anthem gave us a feeling of oneness.

But today, certain interferences have lowered the flag's profile. The emphasis on religion makes nationalistic feelings a second priority.

Go to the basics of giving priority to the national flag and national anthem to start the week in schools, giving the children the patriotic feeling of being Malaysians.

Explain the importance of a united nation to counter any forces out to cause trouble and damage.

To me, pinning the flag on the school uniform is just a show with no significant result.

Cynic: Pre-schoolers and primary school students know nothing about patriotism or what the emblem of a national flag entails.

International students have absolutely no patriotic fervour for any other national flag except for their own.

They are only here for their studies and nothing else.

Secondary school students and students in institutes of higher education may have an inkling of what the flag means.

However, the degree of fervour varies according to how the government treats them in terms of race and religion and whether they are accorded the same equality as their Malay-Muslim peers.

The only places where I think the Jalur Gemilang would be useful are with the political elites and the civil service.

These are the places where corruption is at its highest.

Sticking the national flag over their pockets may, just may, deter them from pocketing bribes or money embezzled from the nation's coffers.

If they are patriotic enough. One would do well to remember that every Malaysian has patriotism for the nation's Jalur Gemilang, but that cannot be applied to any ruling government.

In the words of Mark Twain: "Loyalty for the country - always. Loyalty to the government when it deserves it."

P Dev Anand Pillai: Patriotism will come automatically to anyone if they see and experience equality and fairness in their country of birth, a country that accepts them or a country that gives them refuge.

It should not be forcefully applied.

Our children may wear these uniforms because they do not have a choice, but as they grow older in our system of education, they see what happens right before their eyes as to the opportunities, equality in treatment and even in their religious beliefs, they will begin to think!

We, yesteryear students (1950s to the 1960s) did not have to wear such uniforms, but we were very proud of our achievements when we had the

opportunity to represent our district, state and country in competitions.

We had fairness and better representation back then. Our teachers were “real” teachers who had the power to teach and lead schools.

They moulded us and made us have good character, and that is what has brought us to achieve the best that we can in our lives today.

So let patriotism be natural, sticking it on a uniform when the rest of our lives are the same is not going to achieve the intended results.

Solo: Not sure if wearing a Jalur Gemilang flag or badge on a school shirt will alter the thinking of the wearer.

If that is all it takes, those guys marching around with flags draped across their shoulders should be warriors, but alas, some are just for show.

I prefer teaching school kids the Rukun Negara, and practising what is preached may be more useful. Don't judge the book by its cover.

Coward: Print it? It will not work. And I am ashamed that the National Parent-Teacher Association (NPTA) proposed this.

I am expecting them to oppose this if it is proposed. Why? The increased cost of uniforms. Maybe the members of NPTA can afford it, but not all parents can.

Let's not forget that for underprivileged students, their uniforms are passed down. What happened to the kid whose printed flag faded?

Are you going to tell him to buy a new uniform? Can he afford it? Even if schools ignore faded imprints, school children won't.

You just clearly marked him out as poor in the eyes of other kids. Children can be cruel at times. So why enable them to be?

KK Voter: The tenders were awarded to 26 suppliers, mainly companies that provide printing services and supply stationery.

The average cost for each badge is about 76 sen, but the price differs between each contract, ranging from 72 sen and 80 sen.

At this volume, the badges should not cost 72 to 80 cents, it can be sold at 80 cents with a profit. Malaysiakini should go one step further and dig out the background of the owners of these companies.

LimeHorse5802: A few outcomes will arise from this:

1. Now that the badge's specification is out, manufacturers will produce and sell it at bookshops at prices lower than the average of RM0.76 that the government has procured.

2. Another piece of plastic will be sold at say RM0.50 where the badge could be pinned into it and inserted into the left pocket of students' shirts.

3. The shirt of the school uniform will have two pockets, one on the right for the school badge/name/house colour and on the left for the plastic (where the flag is pinned on) to be inserted into. It is amazing how things will find their correct ways.

The Illusion of Choice: So, this is what is inside the brains of the National Parent Teacher Association.

Meanwhile, students are being bullied to death, being sexually abused and exploited, committing suicide and skipping Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) en masse.

Students lack basic language and arithmetic skills even after SPM, and there are cases of students being bullied by racist teachers.

While all this is going on, the NPTA is prioritising "putting flag stickers on

uniforms”. Bravo, very good use of brains.

Cyclonus: Isn't the flag on the uniform thing going too long and too much already?

If the worry is about safety by using pinned badges, then use magnets or velcro. Or just take off the badge when doing sports.

The kids should be using T-shirts instead of school shirts during physical education anyway.

If we want to imbue a unified Malaysian spirit, then start with the school administration and teachers.

Placebo: Genius. If you can afford to buy a new shirt just so you can have a printed flag on it, then RM0.80 for the badge is hardly a “financial burden”.

Plus, you could always transfer the badges to new shirts later. Let's get real. The government probably spent more on the flags for Hari Merdeka.

**Copyright © 1999-2025 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd**

Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/741244>