

**History class: Teaching of Article 153 jitters MCA**  
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MCA has expressed concern about plans to include Article 153 of the Federal Constitution which deals with the special position of the Malays, as part of the history syllabus in schools.



According to the MCA deputy publicity chief Loh Seng Kok (*left*), the party had already received numerous complaints that the history syllabus was already skewed towards a particular community and the teachings of Article 153 would make matters worse.

"MCA has received feedback from parents that the history textbook syllabus tends to predominantly favour a particular race and religious civilisation, while using derogatory terms of '*pendatang asing* (immigrants) on other races.

"As the newspapers had reported that history as a core subject from primary school will also teach about Article 153 of the Federal Constitution, there are also anxieties of the possibility of misinterpretation where 'special position' (i.e. a 'privilege') maybe taken to read as an 'automatic right,'" said Loh in a statement today.

Loh was commenting on news reports that a compulsory pass was necessary to qualify for *the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) from 2016 onwards.

He said although MCA "respects" the government decision, the party urges the government to firstly review the current syllabus to ensure that it is "holistic" and aimed towards nation building.

Review panel needed

Loh said that a multi-racial panel should be established to formulate the syllabus to ensure that it is based on "facts devoid of personal bias".

"While making history a compulsory subject to be taught in Standard 1 from 2014, the syllabus should not be politically aligned.

"Neither should the authors introduce new terms which hint of racial supremacy or inaccurately suggest that vernacular schools impede national unity...

"Any personal conviction held by the authors which can lead to racial resentment and uneasiness must be completely disallowed," he said.

Loh said that history had shown that patriotism can be cultivated in a multi-racial environment as shown during the repelling of the Japanese occupiers during World War II and subsequent fight for independence from British colonialists.

"On the contrary, distrust can be bred if history textbook contents are not comprehensive but emphasise racial superiority while negating the contributions of other races, or downplaying other worldwide civilisations," he said.

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