

Leave politics out of examinations
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's recent announcement at the Umno general assembly that history would be made a must-pass subject in the SPM examination raises doubts on the motives behind the announcement.

Why did he choose to make such an important announcement at the Umno assembly?

Shouldn't it be more appropriate for him to make the announcement along with the top officers from the Education Department?

Was this decision discussed elaborately before being announced? Is there any hidden agenda behind this abrupt decision?

While making history as a core subject in primary schools may be a good move, making it a must-pass SPM subject will make yet another subject that must be memorised in order to pass the examination.

A clear understanding is needed of the historical facts that shaped the world in which we live.

For this, there is a need for lively discussion and debates along with visits to places of historical sites to appreciate what, how and why certain events took place.

On the local scene the subject should be taught so that our students appreciate the real facts in history, in particular those related to our country's founding, the rule by foreign powers and the Federal Constitution.

The subject should not be used as a political tool to indoctrinate them with a myopic and biased interpretation of these facts.

Rather it could be a tool for forging racial unity and enable our students of all races to value the sacrifices of the founding fathers of our nation without any ethnic distinctions.

It is a fact that all races contributed to what we are today and this fact should not be masked by any political agenda.

Besides our own history, world history should also be included to be taught extensively, because as of late, the knowledge in world history is rather poor among our students.

Many of them seem to be ignorant of major personalities in history who have shaped the world.

Many do not know the circumstances surrounding the world wars, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and cold war between the West and Communism.

Many of our students know little of the great religions of the world; in fact they are ignorant about any religion other than their own.

We must be more open in the teaching of history. Teachers must be more objective and not carried away by emotions while narrating the events that took place in history.

There should be no attempts to hide the truth behind these historical events. In fact students should be allowed to engage in discussions on the various historic events to judge for themselves the right and wrongs of historical events.

There is a need for greater in-depth study involving educational experts and historians before making history a must-pass subject in the SPM examination.

We shouldn't be rash in implementing such an important decision that will affect the patriotism of future generation.

Our education system in general and the public examinations, like the crucial SPM in particular, should be professionally managed and not be politicised as that would be detrimental to the future.

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