

MCA urges review of history subject syllabus
Malaysianmirror.com
26 October 2010

PETALING JAYA - MCA has urged for a review of the history subject's textbooks syllabus before it becomes a mandatory pass in 2013 in order to get a full SPM certificate. It said the current version taught in schools are imbalanced.

The party's deputy publicity chief Loh Seng Kok said Monday that the recent announcement made by Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin that besides Bahasa Malaysia, history will be a "must pass" subject in SPM, must be reviewed and rectified the shortcoming to "prevent ethnic disharmony in our nation."

The party reiterated its concern which was brought up in 2008 to the then Education Minister Hishamuddin Hussein, that the contents contained in the textbooks must be holistic to allow critical thinking.

Loh said in the press statement a review is necessary as: "Teaching of History can influence and shape the mentality and attitudes of students towards their peers who are of a different race and religion and more importantly, towards nation-building."

He noted that the five-year annual review of the History subject would take place soon and suggested for a multiracial panel to oversee the writing of syllabus (for standard one to upper six textbooks) based on facts devoid of personal bias.

"Presently, MCA has received feedback (or complaints) from parents that the History textbook syllabus tends to predominantly favour a particular race and religious civilisation, while using derogatory terms of "pendatang asing" on other races," Loh said.

Noting that primary students will be taught about Article 151 of the Federal Constitution, Loh said "there are also anxieties of the possibility of misinterpretation where "special position" i.e. a "privilege" may be taken to read as an "automatic right."

The MCA central committee member also said the new syllabi created should not be politically aligned and History book authors should not "introduce new terms which hint of racial supremacy or inaccurately suggest that vernacular schools impede national unity."

He warned that, "distrust can be bred if History textbook contents are incomprehensive but emphasise racial superiority while negating the contributions of other races, or downplaying other worldwide civilisations."

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