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Courses are for nation-building

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MUAR: Courses run by the National Civics Bureau are not aimed at "converting" people into joining Umno or Barisan Nasional, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said.

He said the bureau, which focused on nation-building and instilling patriotism, had recently introduced courses related to the 1Malaysia concept.

"I read in the newspapers that the

DPM: They are related to 1Malaysia concept

Selangor government has barred its people from attending programmes by the bureau.

"I don't know why they want to prevent people from attending nation-building courses to instil patriotism and the 1Malaysia concept," he told reporters after presenting 31 cows for Hari Raya Haji to villagers in Pagoh yesterday.

Muhyiddin said the state government could not prevent people,

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especially those from the Federal Government and the private sector, from attending the courses.

"What is the benefit of stopping the people from attending the courses?" he asked.

It was reported yesterday that Selangor was banning its employees and students from state-owned institutions from going for such courses as they were deemed mere "brainwashing indoctrination" by

Barisan.

In Shah Alam, the Federation of Peninsula Malay Students Association (GPMS) accused the Selangor government of practising a divide-and-rule approach.

GPMS president Mohd Faizal Mohd Salleh said the state was using the issue to deflect attention on its failure to resurface roads, paint road curbs, provide basic amenities and respond to the people's plight.

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin also went on a walkabout to chat with Pagoh residents during a short visit.

He spent at least an hour to hear out their problems.

"I wanted the meeting to be informal so that those from non-governmental organisations, clubs, temples and schools could talk openly with me," he said.

Muhyiddin said some of the projects asked by the residents had been approved and would be implemented next year while others were being looked into.