

# Revisit NEM

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**P**ETALING JAYA: To boost confidence in the education system, the Education Ministry and its new minister have been urged to revisit the New Education Model (NEM) proposed by the National Education Policy Committee in 2019, said former education minister Maszlee Malik.

Commenting on a front page report by *theSun* on Monday that there was a confidence deficit in the national education curriculum, he said NEM represents a comprehensive structural reform to replace the current education system.

"It was part of my proposals to the government then to revamp our education system, which was badly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the accompanying series of lockdowns.

"The current national curriculum and education policies are stuck in the 1990s, where the syllabus is taught through subject-based teaching," he said.

"Through NEM, modular and thematic-based learning should have been introduced to primary and secondary students in 2020.

"Here, many sections of the curriculum are linked and integrated within a theme or a concept such as the environment and cybersecurity."

Maszlee added that NEM also addresses the disparity between urban and rural students, the

## Current education curriculum, policies stuck in 1990s, says Maszlee Malik

haves and have-nots and different economic classes.

"Even disparity among the various races has widened and needs to be repaired through serious intervention by the government so that confidence in the national education curriculum can be restored."

On strengthening and enhancing education policies, academic book publishing consultant Zainab Kassim said the quality of education has suffered in recent years due to improper planning and policy execution by the Education Ministry.

"Ministry officials travelled to Europe to research education policies and tried to apply them in our country. However, our values, needs and markets are different from those in Europe and this was not considered before attempting to implement their findings here."

Zainab said the policy of "teaching Science and Mathematics in English" is one of the policies introduced in 2003 that lacked proper research and enforcement.

"(It was) a government policy aimed at improving the command of the English language among primary and secondary school students, where Science and Mathematics are

taught in the English medium as opposed to the Malay medium used previously.

"Implementing it is not an appropriate way to improve students' English language fluency because Science and Mathematics have different applications and semantics compared with learning a language. Excellent grades in Science and Mathematics do not translate to students being fluent in English."

Zainab said although parents have every right to enrol their children in national or international schools, this does not obscure the reality that they are deserting national type schools in favour of Chinese, private or international schools.

On which subjects should be introduced in the primary and secondary curriculum, Taylor University School of Media and Communication senior lecturer Dr Benjamin Y.H. Loh said media literacy should be a compulsory component of the education curriculum, apart from an introduction to politics, the government and good governance.



### Super facts about Spider-man

Here is some of the coolest Spider-Man trivia that every fan should know



Spider-Man was created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko. He first appeared in the comic book *Amazing Fantasy* in 1962. The character is a teenage superhero who has the ability to cling to walls and shoot webs. He is one of the most popular superheroes in the world.

"Including coding and data studies as electives is a good move to provide much-needed tools and skill sets to students to prepare for IR 4.0, but it is important to remember that not all students will want to pursue this route," Loh said.

"In addition, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) subjects should also be introduced. The Education Ministry should focus on destigmatising TVET in the eyes of the public and ensure that all students have career options to pursue."