

New history syllabus soon

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NATIONAL PRIDE: Views of experts incorporated to build up patriotic spirit, says DPM

KUALA LUMPURA: NEW history syllabus for secondary schools is taking shape with recommendations from a special committee headed by Malaysian Historical Society (PSM) executive committee chairman Tan Sri Omar Mohd Hashim. Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said special attention would be given to the contents of the history syllabus in a bid to mould citizens with a high patriotic spirit.

Speaking at PSM's annual meeting here yesterday, Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said: "We have received the report of the special committee to review the history syllabus and secondary school history books.

"We will implement the views and recommendations contained in the report."

The special committee comprised 10 history experts and was set up in May 2011 and chaired by Omar, a former deputy director-general of Education.

The committee's task was to review the history syllabus and textbooks for secondary students with an aim to instil national pride among students.

Muhyiddin commended the role of non-governmental organisations like PSM for their support in preserving the nation's historical heritage and cultural aspirations.

"Their role will help increase people's understanding and awareness of the origins of nation-building and the creation of a national identity.

"It is for this reason that the government recently announced that history would be made a compulsory subject for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) next year."

He said because the effectiveness of the subject depended on the quality of the teachers, the government had embarked on efforts to enhance their expertise.

"The era of thinking that anyone can teach history and of regarding it as a sideline subject has passed.

"We want history to be given a breath of fresh air and serious attention to ensure it is taught by teachers with expertise and deep knowledge."

Muhyiddin said he hoped with the implementation of the policy to make history compulsory in the SPM and a move to teach the subject in primary schools starting next year, the spirit of unity and patriotism could be fostered among the younger generation.

Omar said the special committee had handed over its report, which included recommendations on improving the teaching methods and content, to the Education Ministry two months ago.

Muhyiddin also officially opened the MHS History Gallery, launched books published by MHS and handed over prizes to winners of an essay-writing competition.

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